Presbyterian Law and Procedure

in the

Presbyterian Church
in the United States

Rev. J. D. Leslie, D. D., LL. D.

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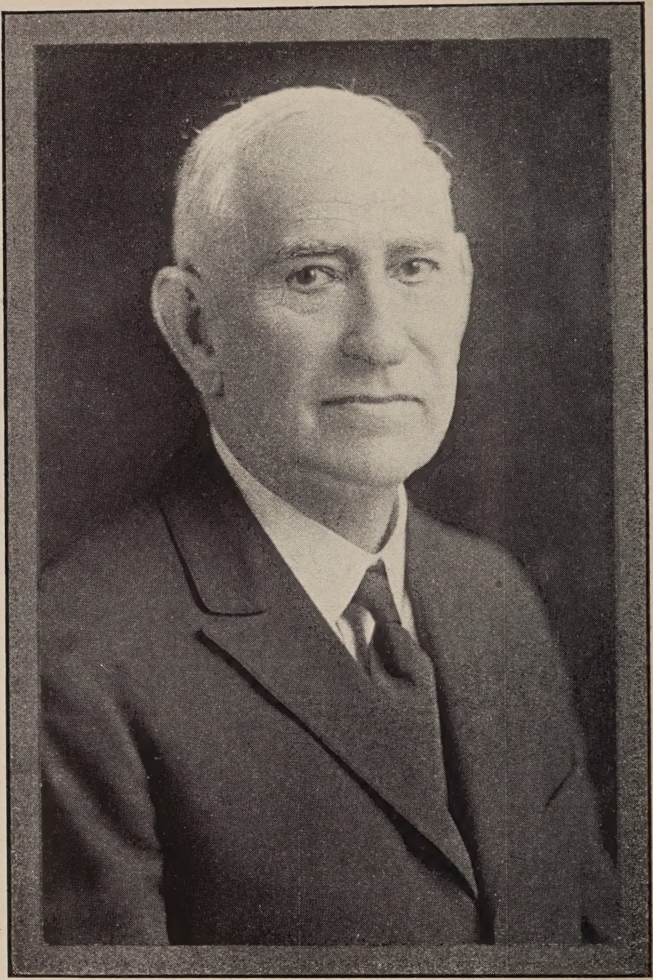

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by
REV. J. D. LESLIE, D.D., LL.D.
Stated Clerk of the General Assembly

1930
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INTRODUCTION

Accuracy and thoroughness are traits that the author of this book, Rev. J. D. Leslie, D. D. LL. D., possesses in the highest degree. In addition to this, he has an ardent love for the Church and has devoted his entire life with unfaltering zeal to matters connected with the progress of the Kingdom of God in the world. He has not spared himself at any time or under any circumstances. Few men can be found who would do the enormous detail work necessary for the production of a book such as "Presbyterian Law and Procedure."

With this book in his hands, no minister, ruling elder, deacon, trustee, officer in the Woman's Auxiliary or any other church organization need be ignorant of what is correct law and procedure, under any circumstances, in the Presbyterian Church. A careful reading of the book will give one a comprehensive and illuminating grasp of the great principles that underlie the Presbyterian organization.

The Presbyterian form of government is the most democratic or representative of any denomination; it is founded upon a scriptural basis, and Dr. Leslie has uncovered the foundations of this form of government in a remarkably clear and simple way. He has analyzed church government, procedure and practice so that it becomes simple and understandable to any mind. The system of cross-references and the valuable index will make the book indispensable to those who are in official relationship to the Church at large or to any local church.

The book should find a place as a textbook in every theological seminary in our denomination, and will, no doubt, be used as a reference book or textbook in other Presbyterian and Reformed seminaries. No minister's library should be without this book. A copy should be kept for reference and readily available in the church office of every local church. It will be consulted frequently by sessions and boards of deacons during their meetings. It will be indispensable to sessions when they make up their annual reports at the close of the year.

It is distinctly different from any other book that has been published. Its purpose is to bring together in logical form and in brief compass all the laws and rules of the Presbyterian Church relating to every phase of its government, work, worship and discipline. Dr. Leslie has carefully worked through Alexander's "Digest," published a number of years ago, and he has compressed all the principal decisions of General Assemblies found in that "Digest" into a smaller compass and more concise form and made them easily available for ready reference.

Busy pastors and church officers, who have not time to search various sources of information, will find in this volume exactly what they need in any emergency. The Presbyterian Church in the United States is to be congratulated upon the thoroughness with which the work has been done and owes a debt of real gratitude to Dr. Leslie, who easily deserves the encomium, "The most efficient stated clerk in any denomination."

—REV. DAVID M. SWEETS, D.D.

NOTE BY THE AUTHOR

The purpose of this book is to bring together in logical form and in brief compass all the laws and the rules of the Church relating to every phase of its government, work, and worship. The material has been gathered from The Confession of Faith, The Larger and Shorter Catechisms, The Form of Government, The Rules of Discipline, and the Directory for Worship. To this material has been added the decisions of the Assembly in judicial cases and its deliverances on all matters of interpretation of law as well as the policy to be pursued in given cases. While all these decisions and deliverances may be found in Alexander's Digest and the Minutes of the General Assembly through 1929, there is a demand for a volume which shall contain in smaller compass and more concise form the matter found in all these sources of information. The hearty reception of the author's "Ready Reference Manual" and the many requests for a larger volume have encouraged me to prepare this volume. It contains much that I hope will be helpful to busy pastors and officers who have not the time nor the opportunity to search the various sources of information for what they desire to know. Very few ministers or officers have the Assembly Digests or a complete set of the Minutes of the Assembly to consult.

I have been encouraged to prepare this volume by a statement made by the late Rev. W. A. Alexander, D. D., who prepared the Assembly Digest and brought it down to 1898. He said in the preface that in the future there should be an abridgment of the material by the elimination of some of the historical matter and all such orders, actions, and deliverances as have been superseded by the changing policies and practice of the Church. This view has greatly influenced me in the selection of material from the Digest.

For valuable assistance in the preparation of this volume, I am indebted to Rev. John M. Wells, D. D., Rev. David M. Sweets, D. D., Rev. Walter L. Lingle, D. D., and Rev. E. C. Scott. They have read the manuscript and offered valuable suggestions.

I have endeavored to indicate by quotation marks the exact paragraphs, phrases, words, etc., quoted, giving the source from which they have been taken. In giving an analysis of a paragraph of The Book of Church Order, I have used figures to indicate the number and the order of the items included in the paragraph. Frequently the paragraph has been divided into one or more subjects in order to emphasize the separate items. It is my judgment that this method of presenting the law of the Church will facilitate the finding of desired information by pastors and others.

This volume has been prepared at brief intervals while I was performing the duties of Stated Clerk. The task of selecting, arranging and unifying the material has required much thought, strength and patience. Imperfections and defects will no doubt be discovered. But my desire to render a service to the Church through the publication of this volume has given me courage to undertake this very difficult task.

If it shall serve in a small way the aim of the writer, and if it shall find a place among the "Digests" that have preceded it, I shall feel amply repaid for this laborious and painstaking task. It is sent forth with the hope that it may find a hearty reception and approval among those who may have occasion to investigate its pages.

—J. D. Leslie.

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EXPLANATION

The following abbreviations are used in this manual:

C. F.	Confession of Faith.
L. C.	Larger Catechism.
S. C.	Shorter Catechism.
B. Ch. O.	Book of Church Order.
M. G. A.	Minutes of the General Assembly.
A. D.	Alexander's Digest.

The figures after the letters A. D. indicate the edition, there being three editions of Alexander's Digest: 1897, 1910, 1922.

Special references to Form of Government, Rules of Discipline and Directory for Worship are omitted. All references are to paragraphs in the Book of Church Order, 1925 Edition, which is numbered consecutively throughout, and 1929 Edition of the Directory for Worship.

Presbyterian Law and Procedure in the Presbyterian Church in the United States

CHAPTER I

HISTORICAL STATEMENT

1. Preparation of Presbyterian Standards. The following historical statement of the preparation of the Standards of the Presbyterian Church, together with a history of their adoption, will prove of much interest and value to the readers of this volume.

"On the 13th of June, 1643, the Parliament of England passed an ordinance with the following title: 'An ordinance of the Lords and Commons of Parliament for the calling of an Assembly of learned and godly divines and others to be consulted with by Parliament for the settling of the Government and liturgy of the Church of England and for vindicating and clearing the doctrine of said Church from false aspersions and interpretations.'" (History of The Presbyterian Churches of the World. Reed, p. 213.)

The Assembly of divines and others met in Westminster Abbey on the first day of July, 1643. The Church of Scotland sent Commissioners to sit in the Assembly. These Commissioners exerted an influence on the Assembly out of proportion to their number. One reason for this was the great ability of the men. At the opening of the Assembly there were sixty-nine ministers present. The whole number of delegates was 120 ministers and 30 laymen.

The work was finished and submitted to Parliament in the following order:

1645. The Directory of Worship.
1645. The Form of Government.
1648. The Confession of Faith.
1648. The Larger and Shorter Catechisms.

The Westminster Assembly closed its sessions February 22, 1649. The Directory of Public Worship was ratified by both Houses of Parliament, March 5, 1645, and the doctrinal part of the Confession of Faith on March 16, 1648.

2. **Presbyterian Church in England.** An order of the House of Commons, October 13, 1642, ordained that the Presbyterian Church Government should be tried for one year, but no further legislation followed.

3. **Presbyterian Church in Scotland.** The Confession of Faith and the Catechisms, together with The Form of Government and The Directory of Worship, were adopted by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland as soon as they had been completed by the Westminster Assembly.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

4. **Presbytery of Philadelphia organized.** The first Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church was organized at Freehold, New Jersey, about 1705, though the early records which have been destroyed might indicate a date as early as 1704. This Presbytery consisted of seven ministers.

5. **Synod of Philadelphia organized.** In 1717 the Synod of Philadelphia was organized. The Presbytery of Philadelphia was divided into three Presbyteries. The ministers on Long Island formed a fourth Presbytery. These Presbyteries were then organized into the Synod of Philadelphia.

6. **General Assembly organized.** "In 1788 the Synod of New York and Philadelphia unanimously resolved to divide itself into four Synods"; and "that the first meeting of the General Assembly be constituted out

of the four Synods to be held on the third Thursday of May, 1789, in the Second Presbyterian church of Philadelphia at eleven o'clock A. M., and that Dr. Witherspoon or in his absence Dr. Rodgers open the General Assembly with a sermon and preside until a moderator is chosen." (What is Presbyterian Law?—Hodge, p. 17.)

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES IS ORGANIZED

7. **Causes of withdrawal from the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.** The causes which led to the withdrawal of a number of Presbyteries situated in the southern states from the jurisdiction of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America are fully set forth in an "Address to the Churches of Christ throughout the earth" which was adopted by the first General Assembly at Augusta, Georgia, in 1861. This address may be found in full in Alexander's Digest, 1922, p. 886.

8. **The Atlanta Convention, August 15, 1861.** "Almost immediately after the action of the Assembly in Philadelphia, in May, 1861, that wrought such hardship on Southern consciences, prominent ministers in the Synod of Virginia published a circular inviting ministers and elders in the Southern Synods to meet in convention, in Richmond, Virginia, on the 24th of July, 1861, 'to advise and recommend measures to ascertain the sense of the Presbyteries in regard to the formation of a General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America.'

"The first Presbytery to take formal and decided action was that of Memphis, which convened in an adjourned meeting on the 13th of June, and after recounting the unconstitutional action of the Philadelphia Assembly, formally renounced all further connection with said Assembly, and respectfully requested all Presbyteries concurring with them to meet with them, by their commissioners, in Memphis, on the third Thursday in May, 1862, then and there to organize a General Assembly, etc. They further suggested to all the Presbyteries to call special meetings and appoint delegates to a convention to meet in Atlanta on the 15th of August, 'to consult upon various important matters, especially our benevolent operations.'

"Immediately upon the heel of this action, East Alabama Presbytery was called together to consider the matter, and while not seceding from the Assembly, earnestly protested and declared their purpose not to acquiesce in said action, and then called for a convention of all the Presbyteries, to meet in Columbia, South Carolina, on Thursday before the second Sabbath in September, 1861, wishing thus to secure co-operative action.

"On the 9th of July, New Orleans Presbytery formally renounced the jurisdiction of the old Assembly, and ordered that a copy of their action be sent to all the Southern Presbyteries, requesting them, if they concur in this action, to appoint commissioners authorized to organize an Assembly, to commence its sessions on the 4th of December next, in Augusta, Georgia. They further opposed the plan of a convention for sundry reasons, which they give.

"But prior to and contemporaneously with this action of the Presbytery of New Orleans, numerous other Presbyteries called for an advisory convention, to be convened in July, in Atlanta, said convention to be composed of delegates chosen and authorized thereto by the Presbyteries. It was felt that it was not only competent for the Presbyteries to take such action, but in the emergency that was upon them that it was eminently wise.

"With this widely expressed demand before them, many of the Presbyteries convened and appointed representatives to attend the proposed convention.

"This convention met in Atlanta, August 15th, 1861, and was in session three days. There were present twenty delegates from eleven Presbyteries, with fourteen corresponding members from six Presbyteries.

"Rev. John S. Wilson, D. D., was chosen president; Rev. H. R. Raymond and Rev. J. S. Harris, secretaries.

"The convention assumed no ecclesiastical authority. All its actions, which were made with entire unity, were in the form of suggestion and recommendation. In view of the probable meeting of a General Assembly in the Confederate States of America before the close of the year, the convention made no suggestion as to the mode in which the work of education, publication, domestic missions, etc., should be carried on, leaving these interests to the Presbyteries, Synods, and the Southwestern Advisory Committee at New Orleans; but as to foreign missions, the convention endorsed the temporary plan for conducting this work devised by certain brethren in Columbia, South Carolina, and pledged the support of the Presbyteries represented in the convention to it. Some account of this plan will be found in the chapter on Foreign Missions of this Digest.

"The convention further urged such Presbyteries in the Confederacy as had not yet renounced the jurisdiction of the General Assembly to do so at their fall meeting; that both those which have already thus withdrawn, and those that may do so in response to this appeal, declare their adherence and submission to the Standards as formerly held, with the single change of the phrase from 'Presbyterian Church in the United States of America'; to 'Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America'; that these Presbyteries send commissioners to a General Assembly, to be held in Augusta, Georgia, on the 4th day of December next, and that Rev. B. M. Palmer, D. D., as principal, and Rev. J. R. Wilson, as alternate, be requested to preach the opening sermon, and preside until the Assembly be organized; that Rev. Dr. Waddel, Rev. Dr. Gray, and Dr. Joseph H. Jones, of Augusta, ruling elder, be a committee on commissions, to examine the credentials of all who may be present; that the respective Synods review the records of the Presbyteries and confirm the action herein proposed.

"On the subject of the war and the condition of the country, the convention, though not a Church court, yet disclaimed the right to determine the political relations of individuals, or to solve for them political questions." (A. D. 1897, p. 67.)

9. The General Assembly organized.

"AUGUSTA, GEORGIA, *December 4, 1861.*

"At a meeting of ministers and ruling elders, who had been commissioned by their respective Presbyteries to convene at this place, on this day, for the purpose of organizing a GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE CONFEDERATE STATES OF AMERICA, it was, on motion of the Rev. John N. Waddel, D. D., (who in conjunction with the Rev. John H. Gray, D. D., and Joseph Jones, had been nominated by a majority of the Presbyteries in the Confederate States, to attend, on the 3rd instant, at the First Presbyterian church in this city, to act as a Committee of Commissions), *Resolved,* That the Rev. Francis McFarland, D. D., one of the most venerable commissioners present, be appointed to preside until a regular organization can be effected.

"Dr. McFarland accordingly presided, and on his motion, the Rev. Benjamin M. Palmer, D. D., another commissioner present, who had been proposed for this service by several of the Presbyteries, was unanimously chosen to preach the opening sermon.

"Dr. Palmer preached in accordance with this choice, and took for his text Ephesians 1. 22, 23: 'And gave Him to be the Head over all things to the Church, which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all.'

"After the sermon, Dr. McFarland proceeded to constitute the sessions with prayer." (A. D. 1897, p. 67.)

10. Standards adopted. The General Assembly immediately after its organization adopted as its Standards the Westminster Confession of Faith, the Larger and Shorter Catechisms and The Book of Church Order containing: 1. The Form of Government. 2. The Rules of Discipline. 3. The Directory of Worship. The Presbyterian Church believes that they contain the authorized exhibition of the sense in which it understands the Scriptures both as to doctrine, form of government and worship.

The Confession of Faith embodies that system of revealed theology popularly termed Calvinistic.

The Catechisms give a summary of most of the heads treated in the Confession of Faith.

The Book of Church Order with its three departments: 1. Form of Government; 2. Rules of Discipline; 3. Directory of Worship, embodies all those laws and rules of government and worship in harmony with the Presbyterian System of Government.

11. Title of the Church changed. The style and title of the Church in 1861 when the first Assembly met was "The Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America." (A. D. 1922, p. 1; M. G. A. 1861, p. 7.) In 1865 the title was changed to "The Presbyterian Church in the United States." (A. D. 1922, p. 1; M. G. A. 1865, p. 357.) No other change has been made in the title of the Church.

CHAPTER II

CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY

12. Important historical dates. The following important dates in the history of the Presbyterian Church from its organization in Scotland to the present time will prove interesting to the reader.

1560. The Presbyterian Church of Scotland came into existence.

1592. Formal ratification of the Presbyterian Church government in Scotland.

1643. Meeting of Westminster Assembly which framed the Confession of Faith, Directory of Worship, Form of Government, and the Larger and Shorter Catechisms.

1684. First Presbyterian church organized in America: Rehoboth, Maryland, by Francis Makemie.

1705. First Presbytery (Philadelphia) organized. Met at Freehold, New Jersey.

1717. First Synod (Philadelphia) organized. Met in Philadelphia.

1729. Adoption of Doctrinal Standards: Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms.

1782. Organization of Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church.

1789. First General Assembly organized. Met in Philadelphia.

1810. Organization of Cumberland Presbyterian Church in Tennessee.

1838. Presbyterian Church, U. S. A., divided into old and new school.

1859. Founding of United Presbyterian Church from parts of A. R. P. Church.

1861. Organization of Presbyterian Church of the Confederate States of America, December, 1861, at Augusta, Georgia.

1864. United Synod of the South (New School Presbyterians in Confederate States) was united with the Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America.

1865. Title changed from Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America to Presbyterian Church in the United States.

1868. The Synod of Kentucky united with the Presbyterian Church, U. S.

1874. The Synod of Missouri united with the Presbyterian Church, U. S.

1879. Revision of the Form of Government and the Directory for Worship by the Presbyterian Church, U. S.

1897. Two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the Westminster Assembly celebrated.

1903. Revision of Standards by Presbyterian Church, U. S. A.

1906. Reunion of Cumberland Church with Presbyterian Church, U. S. A.

1913. Joint meeting of the General Assemblies of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, of the United Presbyterian Church, and a commission of the Associate Reformed Church of the South, at Atlanta in May.

1925. Book of Church Order revised and adopted, by the Presbyterian Church, U. S.

1929. The Directory for Worship revised and adopted, by the Presbyterian Church, U. S.

CHAPTER III

THE CONSTITUTION

13. Preliminary statement. The constitution of a Church consists of a system of doctrine and laws adopted by the body for the direction of the whole Church. It consists of:

14. A system of doctrine or beliefs. A creed is necessary to the existence of the Church. It is either written or unwritten. In a written creed, the doctrines for which the Church stands are all clearly set forth. "It is a summary statement of what some religious teachers believe concerning the Christian System, stated in their own uninspired words. But they claim that these words fairly and briefly express the true sense of the inspired words . . . . The creeds of the modern Protestant world are documents carefully constructed by some church courts of supreme authority in their several denominations or by some learned committee appointed by them, and formally adopted by them as their doctrinal standard." (Rev. R. L. Dabney, D. D., Address at Westminster celebration, 1897.)

15. A system of laws and rules. There must be a system of laws and rules for the government of the Church, elaborated in accordance with the belief of the Church as to the doctrine of church government and polity. The Church believes that a form of government for the Church is prescribed in the Scriptures and that it is in harmony with the system of doctrine which is also taught in the Scriptures.

The Presbyterian Church entertains the above views of the Constitution and formally adopted a constitution as will be seen by the extracts from the records which follow.

16. The doctrines of the Presbyterian Church. The doctrines of the Presbyterian Church are given in full in the Confession of Faith and the Larger and Shorter Catechisms.

It is thought wise at this place to name a few of the outstanding Calvinistic doctrines for which the Presbyterian Church is especially noted. We might mention a number of doctrines which the Presbyterian Church holds in common with other Evangelical Churches, such as the inspiration of the Scriptures, the Deity of Jesus Christ, the Atonement, Regeneration, Repentance, Justification by Faith, Sanctification and the Resurrection of Jesus from the Dead. All the great evangelical denominations have laid emphasis on all these doctrines. The Presbyterian Church has emphasized certain distinctive doctrines which have served to mark it as a great witness-bearing Church.

Rev. Walter L. Lingle, D. D., in his book, "Presbyterianism—a Heritage and a Challenge," has written the following which, with his permission, we print:

I

17. The Sovereignty of God. "The Sovereignty of God is the first great doctrine of the Presbyterian Church. This doctrine is the central sun of Calvinism around which all other Calvinistic doctrines revolve. It may be expressed in the following scriptural language: 'The Lord God Omnipotent Reigneth.' 'He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, what doest Thou?' Dr. John Ker, the great Scotch theologian, used to say that Calvinism can be summed up in the five following words: 'All things are of God.' The Bible begins with this thought: 'In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.' Our Shorter Catechism begins with the same idea: 'Man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever.' The exaltation of God is the keynote of Calvinism.

II

18. Predestination—God's Eternal Plan. "Out of this doctrine of God's sovereignty flows the Calvinistic doctrine of predestination. In the popular mind predestination is more closely associated with the Presbyterian Church than any other doctrine. What is Predestination? In its larger sense, it is God's eternal plan. Presbyterians believe that God has an eternal plan which includes the earth, heaven, hell, in fact, the whole universe, and the life of every individual in the world that now is and in the world to come. Our Confession of Faith says that there are high mysteries connected with this doctrine and that it should be handled with prudence and care.

III

19. Sin. "All evangelical denominations believe in the doctrine of sin, but no other denomination has ever stressed it in the same way that Presbyterians have done. Believing in a great and sovereign God, the Calvinist believes that sin against such a God is a terrible thing. He believes that the unregenerate sinner is dead in sins, and that he has in him no power to save himself. He is not simply sick, but is spiritually dead and has no more power to save himself than a dead man has to raise himself to life. This deadness of the soul and this total spiritual inability of the unsaved is sometimes known as total depravity. Presbyterians believe that God and God alone can save.

IV

20. Grace.—A Gift of God. "This brings us to the Presbyterian view of the grace of God. There are people in these latter days who believe in salvation by education, by culture and by character. They believe that the sinner is simply a wandering child of God's who only needs to be made conscious of his sonship and all will be well. He can do the rest. The Presbyterian Calvinist believing that we have sinned a great sin against a great God, and that we are dead in sins, believes that we can only be saved by the grace of God, and by grace we mean the free, unmerited gift of God. The Apostle Paul states this truth clearly in Ephesians 2:8. 'For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God.' Did you ever notice how clearly the Bible teaches that our salvation and everything connected with it is a gracious gift of God? First of all, He gave His only Son to die for our sins. The Bible clearly teaches that repentance and faith are the gifts of God. The power to confess Christ is a gift. 'The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life.' In short, eternal life and everything that leads up to it is an unmerited gift from God. The doctrine makes God the absolute author of salvation and leaves the saved sinner no ground for boasting. This doctrine also helps the Presbyterian to sing with a new and deeper meaning these immortal lines

'Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to thy Cross I cling.'

V

21. **Final Perseverance.** "Inasmuch as Christ has died for him and the Holy Spirit has regenerated him and the mighty God has saved him, the Presbyterian does not believe that there is any power in earth or hell that can pluck him out of the Father's hand. He believes that Jesus Christ who has begun the good work in him will perfect it until that day. He believes that there is nothing that can separate him from the

love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. He loves to sing Dr. George Matheson's great hymn:

> 'Oh love that wilt not let me go.'

This is called the doctrine of the Final Perseverance of the Saints. Perhaps it would be more appropriate to call it the Final Preservation of the Saints. It is of great comfort to feel and to know that our Heavenly Father is holding us, and that He is not going to let us go."

22. **Brief statement.** The General Assembly in 1913 adopted a brief statement of the Doctrines of the Presbyterian Church. This statement was drawn from the Standards. It was not sent down to the Presbyteries for their advice and consent and does not constitute a part of the Confession of Faith. It was published in pamphlet form by the Presbyterian Committee of Publication, Richmond, Va. It is printed here in full as many do not have access to the sources of information mentioned above. (A. D. 1922, p. 8; M. G. A. 1913, pp. 45-47.)

A BRIEF STATEMENT OF BELIEF DRAWN FROM THE STANDARDS OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE U. S.

I

23. **God.** God is a spirit, infinite, eternal and unchangeable; all-powerful, holy, wise, good, true and just, hating all sin. He is merciful and gracious, long suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. This truth is summed up in the Bible statement, "God is love." He exists in three persons—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—who are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory.

II

24. The Bible. The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, written by men inspired by the Holy Spirit, are the word of God. They are the revelation of God's will for man and of man's duty to God, and are the only infallible and authoritative rule of faith and life.

III

25. God's purpose. The eternal purpose of God includes all events; it is holy and wise and does not deprive man of freedom nor make God the author of sin.

IV

26. Creation. For the manifestation of His own glory, God created the world and all things therein, whether visible or invisible, and all very good. He made man after His own image; male and female created He them, with immortal souls, endowed with knowledge, righteousness and holiness, having the law of God in their hearts and power to fulfill it, and yet under a possibility of transgression, being left to the freedom of their own will.

V

27. Sin and fall. Sin is the violation of God's law, either by omission or commission. Our first parents, being tempted by Satan, disobeyed God's command, and so by their own choice fell from their original state of innocence and communion with God, and came under the power of sin, the penalty of which is eternal death. All men, by reason of their relationship to Adam as their representative head and common ancestor, are born with a sinful nature, from which all actual transgressions proceed, and out of this condition no one is able to deliver himself.

VI

23. **Salvation.** God, who is rich in mercy, so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son to be the Saviour of sinners. The salvation thus provided is freely offered to all men, and is sufficient for all, but becomes efficacious only in those who believe in Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

VII

29. **Election.** Before the foundation of the world, God the Father chose unto Himself in Christ, a people whom He gave to His Son, that they should be holy and without blame before Him in love. Those who come to years of discretion receive this salvation only through faith in Christ, being regenerated by the Holy Spirit. Those who die in infancy, and others who are incapable of exercising choice, are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit, who works when and where and how He pleases. We thus declare that God's electing grace has peopled heaven with a multitude that no man can number, and has never sent one soul to hell.

VIII

30. **Christ the Redeemer.** The Lord Jesus Christ, being the eternal Son of God, became truly man, being conceived by the Holy Ghost and born of the Virgin Mary, yet without sin; so that He is both God and man, and the only perfect mediator between God and man, by whom alone we can come unto the Father. By a life of perfect obedience and by His sacrificial death, He satisfied divine justice, made a perfect atonement for sin, and reconciles us to God. He rose from the dead and ascended into heaven, where He makes continual intercession for us; and He sits at the right hand of God, clothed with honor and power, subduing His people unto Himself, ruling and defend-

ing them, and restraining and conquering all His and their enemies. He will come again to receive and reward His people and to judge the world.

IX

31. The Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit, the third person of the Godhead, applies the redemption purchased by Christ. He persuades and enables men to obey the call of the gospel, and dwells continually in every believer as the spirit of truth, of holiness, of power and of comfort, and is thereby the author of all Christian experience.

X

32. Justification by Faith. Every one who humbly relies upon Christ alone for salvation and in repentance confesses and forsakes his sins, is pardoned and accepted as righteous in God's sight, solely on the ground of the perfect obedience and sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Every one thus pardoned and accepted is adopted into God's family, and becomes an heir of God and a joint heir with Jesus Christ.

XI

33. The Christian life. The Holy Spirit imparts spiritual life by the direct operation of His power, so that, being born from above, we are the children of God, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which are not the ground, but the fruits of salvation. Dwelling in Christ's people, He purifies them more and more from sin, enables them to render a cheerful and loving obedience to God's commandments, and perseveres in His sanctifying work in their hearts, until at last they stand perfect in the presence of Christ in glory. Believers may at times backslide, growing indifferent and cold, and even falling into grievous sins; yet God does not cast them off, but chastens them and restores them through repentance to fellowship with Him.

XII

34. The Church. We acknowledge one universal church, the same in all ages, of which Christ is the head. The church invisible consists of all the redeemed. The church visible is composed of all those throughout the world who profess faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, together with their children, and it is the duty of all believers openly to profess their faith by uniting with the church. The church exists to bring to Christ those whom the Father has given Him and to establish the Redeemer's kingdom. The mission of the church is spiritual, and its work is to witness to the truth of God to the ends of the earth and to preach the gospel to all men in every generation. We believe in the separation of church and state. The scriptural form of church government is by elders or presbyters, chosen by the members of the church; but we do not regard the form of government of a church as essential to its existence. We recognize the validity of the ministry and sacraments of all evangelical churches, and seek the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace. Ministers, elders and deacons, at their ordination, are required to subscribe to the system of doctrine contained in our standards, but the sole condition for membership in the church is a credible confession of Christ as Saviour.

XIII

35. The sacraments. There are two sacraments—baptism, which symbolizes the work of the Holy Spirit, and the Lord's Supper, which symbolizes the sacrificial death of Christ. Sprinkling or pouring is the scriptural mode of baptism, but the mode is not essential to the validity of the sacrament. Children of believers, before reaching the age of personal accountability, are to be baptized on the faith of their parents, *who in the sacramental act enter into formal* *covenant relations with* God. We invite to the Lord's table all who love Him in sincerity and truth and who are in good and regular standing in evangelical churches.

XIV

36. Death and resurrection. The souls of believers are at their death made perfect in holiness, and do immediately pass into glory, and their bodies, being still united to Christ, do rest in the grave till the resurrection. At the resurrection, believers, being raised up in glory, shall be openly acknowledged and acquitted in the day of judgment and made perfectly blessed in the full enjoyment of God to all eternity; but the wicked shall go away into everlasting punishment.

XV

37. The final state. There are but two states of future existence—heaven, the home of the redeemed, and hell, the abode of the finally impenitent. There is no purgatory, nor is there any probation after death. Man retains his identity after death, and there will be recognition in the future life. We believe in the ultimate and complete triumph of the Saviour's kingdom and with all His followers in all ages we toil and pray for the speedy coming of the day when our glorious Lord shall see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied.

38. Interpretation of "System of Doctrine." In the ordination of Ministers, Ruling Elders, and Deacons, the question is asked: "Do you sincerely receive and adopt the Confession of Faith and the Catechisms of this Church as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures, etc.?" The question has been asked: "What do the words 'system of doctrine' as taught in the Holy Scriptures mean?"

The General Assembly has given the following interpretation of the words "System of Doctrine":

"First, The words 'system of doctrine' as applied to the whole body of truth contained in the Confession of Faith, being not ambiguous, but sufficiently definite and plain, the Assembly considers it unnecessary, and therefore declines, to give any further definition.

"Second, The use of the words 'system of doctrine' in the terms of subscription precludes the idea of the necessary acceptance of every statement in the Standards by the subscribers, but involves the acceptance of so much as is vital to the system as a whole. Differences of opinion as to whether any divergences are or are not vital to the system, when of sufficient importance, should be determined judicially by the proper Ecclesiastical Courts." (A. D. 1922, p. 16; M. G. A. 1898, p. 223.)

39. Later deliverance. In 1924 the General Assembly was asked to make another declaration concerning certain doctrines of the Christian Church. The Assembly replied by saying: "Because of the clarity and fulness of the presentation of Christian truth in our Confession of Faith and Catechisms, and in the absence of any disposition to question the fundamental truths as set forth in these symbols of our faith, the General Assembly simply reaffirms its faith in the great fundamentals of our Church as set forth in our Confession of Faith and Catechisms, and declines to make additional declarations of doctrine." (M. G. A. 1924, p. 63.)

40. Interpretations of Confession of Faith and deliverances on inspiration and evolution. In response to Overture No. 27, from the Presbytery of Paris, asking for certain advance interpretations of the Confession of Faith, and certain advance deliverances on inspiration and evolution, we recommend that the following answer be given by the Assembly:

"No doctrinal deliverance of an Assembly can displace the constitutional doctrinal basis of our Church.

"Our form of government prescribes this question for ordination, 'Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice?'

"Our Confession of Faith declares that the Scriptures 'are given by inspiration of God to be the rule of faith and life.'

"Our Shorter Catechism states that 'the Scriptures principally teach what man is to believe concerning God and what duty God requires of man.'

"The requirement is, therefore, clear: namely, belief in the Scriptures as the only infallible rule of faith and life.

"A man's position in this matter is to be determined as follows: In the case of an applicant for ordination, by examination; in the case of a minister, by judicial process, in accordance with our Form of Government.

"The Assembly can deal with specific cases only when they come before the Assembly upon appeal or complaint and with the full record of the case before it.

"This answer applies to both questions asked in the overture." (M. G. A. 1928, p. 45.)

41. **Terms of subscription.** Subscription to the Confession of Faith and the Larger and Shorter Catechisms is required of ministers, ruling elders and deacons. (B. Ch. O., par. 136-148.)

42. **How the Confession of Faith may be changed.** "Amendments to the Confession of Faith and Catechisms of this Church may be made only in the following manner: (1) The approval of the proposed amend-

ment by the General Assembly and its recommendation to the Presbyteries. (2) The advice and consent of three-fourths of the Presbyteries. (3) The approval and enactment by a subsequent General Assembly." (B. Ch. O., par. 161.)

43. **Changes in the Confession of Faith.** "The most striking amendment ever made to the Westminster Confession was the striking out by the American Presbyterian Church of the paragraph relating to the relationship of Church and State. The framers of the Confession provided for the union of Church and State. As it originally came from the hands of the Assembly and the Parliament, the Confession on this particular point was decidedly Erastian. The American Church struck this out." (Rev. Walter L. Lingle, D. D.)

There have been very few other changes in the Confession of Faith since it was prepared by the Westminster Assembly of Divines. The minor changes that have been made relate only to such matters as marriage, and divorce, works of necessity and mercy, etc. The fundamental doctrines have not been changed.

44. **Revision of proof texts in the Confession of Faith.** "The General Assembly in answer to an overture appointed an ad-interim committee to revise the proof texts of our Doctrinal Standards." (A. D. 1922, p. 12; M. G. A. 1903, p. 507.) After numerous changes in the committee and after making several reports, and "after fifty-five Presbyteries voting for the change, eight voting in the negative and other Presbyteries making various suggestions, the Assembly enacted the report and directed the Committee of Publication to print the Standards with proof texts as revised." (A. D. 1922, p. 14; M. G. A. 1910, pp. 47, 48.)

45. **The Shorter Catechism.** There are a number of simplified forms of the Shorter Catechism in use, but

the General Assembly declined to modify or change in any way the Westminster Shorter Catechism. (A. D. 1922, p. 10; M. G. A., 1911, p. 65.)

The Larger Catechism was written at the same time as the Shorter Catechism by the Westminster Assembly and is a part of the Constitution.

CHAPTER IV

PRESBYTERIAN GOVERNMENT

46. Preliminary statement. The Presbyterian Church holds that the members of the Church possess an inalienable right in the government of the Church. From the beginning, the people have exercised this right by the election of representatives generally called ruling elders. The Presbyterian Church gets its name from the Greek word, "Presbuteros," for elder found all through the New Testament. It is, then, a church which is governed by elders who are chosen by the people.

The Presbyterian Church further holds that the Presbyters (elders) who minister in word and doctrine are also officers and belong to the same order as the ruling elders.

The Presbyterian Church further holds that the outward visible Church is one, in the sense that a small part is subject to a larger, and a larger to the whole, constituting a system of courts. These courts are the Session, the Presbytery, the Synod, and the General Assembly.

These three great principles, the government by elders, the parity of the ministry and a system of courts of appeals have always been recognized in the Church. This system of government by elders through a system of Courts may be traced through the Old Testament. The New Testament Church started out with a simple representative system of self-government. Within a few years after the apostolic age the Church began to drift away from this representative form of government. For centuries it seemed to be lost. In its place autocracy and almost every other form of government had its day. But the Presbyterian form of government was not altogether lost. Truth is eternal and cannot die. So the Presbyterian form of government was preserved by God through a small body of His people.

"The most ancient churches of which we have information are the Waldensian and Bohemian Churches, the Syrian Church in the far East, the ancient British churches and the Culdee Church in Iona, Scotland, which had received Christianity, according to Tertullian and Baronius, before the death of John. These churches claim to have received their form of government from the Apostles' teaching and practice. Calvin and the other reformers derived their principles of polity and discipline from the Scriptures and from these ancient churches." (What is Presbyterian Law? Hodge, pp. 11, 12.)

"The Waldensians were not Presbyterians until they were instructed by William Farel in 1532. While the Culdee Church was organized very early, it is not counted a Presbyterian church by modern historians." (Rev. Walter L. Lingle, D. D.)

In the early organization and in later times, representative self-government by elders has been made one of the fundamental principles of the Presbyterian Church. The people have always had the right to elect their own ministers, elders, and deacons. The few faithful ones contended for this inalienable right of the people and fought for it. The Church today still holds fast to this principle of representative self-government. We believe that it is not only the scriptural form, but the most perfect form of government in existence in the world.

47. **Book of Church Order.** The Presbyterian Church has embodied its Form of Government, including all the rules for discipline and public worship, under the name of the Book of Church Order. From the earliest establishment of the Church after the New Testa-

ment times a form of government and worship has been in use.

"Our Book of Church Order has a long and notable line of ancestors. John Calvin wrote the first modern Presbyterian Book of Order for the Church at Geneva in 1542.

"John Knox sat at the feet of John Calvin for several years, and then returned to Scotland and wrote the 'First Book of Discipline' for the Presbyterian Church of Scotland in 1560. The whole history of Presbyterian Church government in Scotland goes back to this first Book of Discipline.

"The Westminster Assembly, which met in London in 1643, wrote not only our Confession of Faith and Catechisms, but also 'The Form of Presbyterian Church Government.' The Presbyterian Churches of England, Scotland, and Ireland adopted this Westminster Form of Government.

"When our Presbyterian forefathers came to America they brought with them the Westminster 'Form of Presbyterian Church Government,' and it became the basis of Church law in the American Presbyterian Church.

"The first General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America was organized in 1789. The General Synod in preparing for the organization of the General Assembly practically rewrote the Form of Presbyterian Church Government in 1788, in order to adjust it to the conditions in America. This new book was called 'The Form of Government and Discipline of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.' It was revised a number of times prior to 1861, when the Southern Presbyterians withdrew and formed the Presbyterian Church in the United States.

"When the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States was organized on December 4, 1861, it adopted the Form of Government and Discipline which had been in use since 1788. In 1863 our General Assembly took steps to revise this Form of Government and Discipline with the result that a thorough-going revision was adopted in 1879. A great many amendments were added during the next forty years.

"In 1921 our General Assembly took steps to revise our Book of Church Order again. Another thorough-going revision was proposed by the Committee on Revision, adopted by the General Assembly, approved by a large majority of the Presbyteries, and enacted into law by the General Assembly of 1925.

"While our present Book of Church Order is the result of numerous revisions, it still contains many phrases, sentences and paragraphs which are found in the Form of Government and Discipline of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, which was first adopted in 1788.

"This brief sketch shows that our Book of Church Order goes back through a long and noble line of ancestors to the days of John Calvin. We also believe that in its basic principles it goes back to the Holy Scriptures." (Rev. Walter L. Lingle, D. D., Preface to Book of Church Order, 1925 Ed.)

48. **Presbyterianism.** "Presbyterianism is the government of the Church by parliamentary assemblies, composed of two classes of Presbyters, and of Presbyters only, and so organized as to realize the visible unity of the whole Church." (Rev. J. H. Thornwell, D. D.)

49. **Form of government.** In addition to the general statement it is necessary to add that the Form of Government adopted and in use in the Presbyterian Church conforms in detail to the principles of Presbyterianism set forth in the Scriptures. A system of

Government is necessary to the conduct of the business of the Church.

The Form of Government is fully analyzed and presented in this manual.

50. Rules of Discipline. The Rules of Discipline were adopted at the same time as the Form of Government. Discipline is in the hands of the courts of the Church and is exercised in order to keep the Church pure and clean and free from error.

The details of the Rules of Discipline are found on the pages of this manual.

51. Directory for Worship. The Directory for Worship was revised in 1924, approved by the Presbyteries in 1927, but the Assembly delayed until 1929 to enact it into law. The substance of the directory is found on the pages of this book.

52. How the Book of Church Order may be amended. The Book of Church Order, composed of the Form of Government, the Rules of Discipline, and the Directory for Worship may be amended. "Amendments to the Book of Church Order may be made only in the following manner:

"1. The approval of the proposed amendment by the General Assembly and its recommendation to the Presbyteries.

"2. The advice and consent of a majority of the Presbyteries.

"3. The approval and enactment by a subsequent General Assembly." (B. Ch. O., par. 160.)

53. Form suggested for the enactment of an amendment to the Book of Church Order. "Whereas a majority of the Presbyteries have noted approval of the amendment to the Book of Church Order, paragraph ......, sent down by the General Assembly of 19......, this General Assembly does now approve and enact this (or these, if more than one amendment) amendment to paragraph............, and declares it to be a part of the constitution of the Church."

The above form may be used in enacting an amendment to the Confession of Faith by changing the number of Presbyteries from "a majority" to "three-fourths."

54. **Procedure when an amendment has been approved by a previous Assembly and approved by a majority of the Presbyteries.** The Assembly may do one of three things with regard to an amendment previously approved.

1. It may approve and enact it.

2. It may defer action for one year. (B. Ch. O., par. 163.)

3. It may decline to enact it. (M. G. A. 1906, pp. 52-53; M. G. A. 1909, pp. 51-52; M. G. A. 1925, p. 52.) (See "Enacting Power" under "General Assembly.")

55. **How organic union may be effected.** "Full organic union and consolidation of the Presbyterian Church in the United States with any other ecclesiastical body can be effected only in the following manner:

"1. The approval of the proposed union by the General Assembly and its recommendation to the Presbyteries.

"2. The advice and consent of three-fourths of the Presbyteries.

"3. The approval and consummation by a subsequent General Assembly." (B. Ch. O., par. 162.)

56. **How this paragraph (161) and paragraph 162 may be changed.** "These paragraphs (161) and (162) can be amended only by the same method which is prescribed for the amendment of the Confession of Faith and Catechisms of the Church." (B. Ch. O., par. 161 and 162.)

CHAPTER V

THE CHURCH

57. Definition of the Church. "It is a society of faithful or believing men, called of God, through the Word, out of the whole human race, to the communion of the Covenant of Grace in Christ." ([Witsius] Peck's Ecclesiology, p. 13.)

58. The invisible Church. "The catholic or universal church, which is invisible, consists of the whole number of the elect, that have been, are, or shall be gathered into one, under Christ the Head thereof; and is the spouse, the body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all." (C. of F., Ch. XXV: I.)

59. The visible Church. "The visible Church, which is also catholic or universal under the Gospel, (not confined to one nation as before under the law) consists of all those throughout the world, that profess the true religion, together with their children; and is the Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ; the house and family of God, out of which there is no ordinary possibility of salvation." (C. of F., Ch. XXV: II.)

60. The visible Church defined. "The visible Church consists of all those who make profession of the true religion." (B. Ch. O., par. 12.)

61. Children also members of the visible church. The children of believing parents are included with the parents who compose the visible Church. (B. Ch. O., par. 12.)

62. Visible church more or less perfect. "This catholic church hath been sometimes more, sometimes less, visible. And particular churches, which are members thereof, are more or less pure, according as the doctrine of the Gospel is taught and embraced, ordinances administered, and public worship performed more or less purely in them." (C. of F., Ch. XXV: IV.)

63. Visible church subject to mixture and error. "The purest churches under heaven are subject both to mixture and error: and some have so degenerated, as to become no churches of Christ, but synagogues of Satan. Nevertheless; there shall be always a church on earth, to worship God according to His will." (C. of F., Ch. XXV:V.)

64. Christ is the Head. "There is no other head of the church but the Lord Jesus Christ. Nor can the Pope of Rome, in any sense be head thereof; but is that anti-christ, that man of sin, and son of perdition, that exalteth himself, in the church, against Christ, and all that is called God." (C. of F., Ch. XXV: VI.)

65. Christ the King and Head. "Jesus Christ, upon whose shoulders the government is, whose name is called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace; of the increase of whose government and peace there shall be no end; who sits upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom to order it and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth, even forever; having all power given unto him in heaven and in earth by the Father, who raised Him from the dead, and set Him on His own right hand, far above all principality and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come, and hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the Head over all things to the Church, which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all; he, being ascended up far above all heavens, that He might fill all things, received gifts for His Church, and gave all officers necessary for the edification of His Church and the perfecting of His saints." (B. Ch. O., par. 8.)

66. Scriptural form of Church government. "The scriptural form of Church government, which is that of the Presbytery, is comprehended under five heads, namely: 1. The Church; 2. Its members; 3. Its officers; 4. Its courts; 5. Its orders." (B. Ch. O., par. 1.)

67. **The division of the Church into many individual churches.** The Church is very properly divided into a number of individual churches without destroying the unity of the Church. (B. Ch. O., par. 14.)

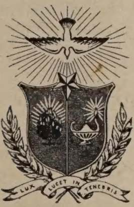
68. **The division of the Church into denominations.** "This visible unity of the body of Christ, though obscured, is not destroyed by its division into different denominations of professing Christians; but all of these which maintain the Word and Sacraments in their fundamental integrity are to be recognized as true branches of the Church of Jesus Christ." (B. Ch. O., par. 13.)

69. **The officers of the Church.** "The officers of the church, by whom all its powers are administered, are, according to the Scriptures, ministers of the Word, ruling elders and deacons." (B. Ch. O., par. 4, 31.)

70. **Ministry, oracles and ordinances of the visible Church.** "Unto this catholic visible Church, Christ hath given the ministry, oracles and ordinances of God, for the gathering and perfecting of the saints, in this life, to the end of the world; and doth by His own presence and Spirit, according to His promise, make them effectual thereunto." (C. of F., Ch. XXV: III.)

SEAL OF THE CHURCH

71. **Origin of the seal.** The seal of the Presbyterian Church, a cut of which is herewith given, was prepared about 1887 by a committee of which Rev. R. P. Kerr, D. D., was chairman. The Executive Committee of Publication, in making its annual report to the General Assembly, mentioned the fact that the seal had been prepared and adopted by the Executive Committee. The symbolism is most significant and the seal has been used in an increasing



way throughout the church, though never officially adopted by the Assembly.

72. Meaning of the Seal.

The Dove—The Holy Spirit.
The Star—Christ.
The Lamp—The Light of the World.
The Bush—The Indestructible Church.
The Laurel Wreath—The victory and triumph of the Church.
Latin quotation—"Let the light shine in darkness."

For a fuller description, see the "Presbyterian Survey," December, 1926, p. 713, and "Presbyterian of the South," September 4, 1929.

CHAPTER VI

CHURCH POWER

73. Preliminary statement. "The life of the Church is one; officers are but the organs through which it is manifested in acts of jurisdiction and instruction; and the acts of all the officers, in consequence of this organic relation, are the acts of the Church. . . . The power resides in the Church, it is exercised by its officers; ministers are her mouth as elders are her hands. Both equally represent her. . . . All lawful acts of all lawful officers are acts of the Church, and they who hear the preacher or the Presbyter hear the Church." (Peck's Ecclesiology, p. 162.)

74. Comes from Christ. "Church power comes from Christ alone. The government of the Church is upon His shoulders, to order it (His kingdom), and to establish it with judgment and justice forever. All power is given to Him, in heaven and earth, by the Father, and He is the head of the Church, which is His body, and head over all things else for the sake of His body." (Peck's Ecclesiology, par. 5, p. 107.)

75. Church power vested. The Presbyterian Church teaches that Christ has vested the power of the Church in the whole body. Acting under this authority, the whole body, or the Church, elects pastors, ruling elders and deacons, to whom the exercise of this power, which is wholly spiritual, is committed. The Presbyterian Church then becomes a representative government in the truest sense.

76. Vested in the whole body. "The power which Christ has committed to His Church vests in the whole body, the rulers and the ruled, constituting it a spiritual commonwealth. This power, as exercised by the people, extends to the choice of those officers whom He has appointed in His Church." (B. Ch. O., par 15.)

77. **Only "ministerial and declarative."** "This power, therefore, in the Church is only ministerial and declarative, that is the power of a minister or a servant to declare and execute the law of the Master, Christ, as revealed in His word, the statute-book of His kingdom, the Scriptures contained in the Old and New Testaments. No officer or court of the Church has any legislative power. 'Christ alone is Lord of the conscience, and hath left it free from the doctrine and commandments of men which are in anything contrary to the Word, or beside it, in matters of faith and worship.' (C. of F., Ch. XX, Sec. 2.) Slavery to Christ alone is the true and only freedom of the human soul." (Peck's Ecclesiology, par. 6, p. 107.)

78. **Wholly spiritual.** "Ecclesiastical power, which is wholly spiritual, is twofold: The officers exercise it sometimes severally, as in preaching the Gospel, administering the sacraments, reproving the erring, visiting the sick, and comforting the afflicted, which is the power of order; and they exercise it sometimes jointly in Church courts, after the form of judgment, which is the power of jurisdiction." (B. Ch. O., par. 16.)

79. **Sole functions of the Church.** "The sole functions of the Church as a kingdom and government distinct from the civil commonwealth, are to proclaim, to administer, and to enforce the law of Christ revealed in the Scriptures." (B. Ch. O., par. 17.)

80. **The Church the agency of Christ.** "The Church, with its ordinances, officers, and courts, is the agency which Christ has ordained:

"1. For edification and government of His people.
"2. For the propagation of the faith.
"3. For the evangelization of the world."

(B. Ch. O., par. 18.)

81. The exercise of ecclesiastical power sanctioned by Christ. "The exercise of ecclesiastical power, whether joint or several, has the divine sanction, when in conformity with the statutes enacted by Christ, the Law-giver, and when put forth by courts or by officers appointed thereunto in His Word." (B. Ch. O., par. 19.)

82. Inability of Church courts to commit or transfer their governing authority to any organization in the Church. In answer to Overture No. 28, from the Presbytery of Paris, we recommend that the following questions set out in said overture be answered as follows:

1. Since Chapter XII, paragraphs 51 and 52 of the Book of Church Order declares the Church is governed by four courts—Church Sessions, Presbyteries, Synods, and the General Assembly—are there any other governing bodies in the Church? We recommend that the Assembly answer "No."

2. Can any one of these four courts of the Church delegate, commit or transfer their governing authority save by the prescribed commissions in certain cases? We recommend that the Assembly answer "No."

3. Has the organization known as "The Men of the Church" any authority whatsoever over any local church? We recommend that the Assembly answer "No."

4. Has any other organization? We recommend that the Assembly answer "No."

5. Is not the session of the local church the supreme authority in the local church? We recommend that the Assembly answer "Yes."

6. Can any organization or brotherhood or similar body or association (though composed exclusively of

members of our churches) exercise power or authority over any like organization in the local church? We recommend this answer: We hold that the session of the local church is the sole governing authority in the local church (paragraph 65, page 31, and page 79, Book of Church Order), and that every organization in the local church is subject to the session of the local church. Any recognized organization or brotherhood or similar body or association, composed exclusively of members of our churches, may exercise power or authority over any like organization in the local church, provided always that such power or authority is exercised within limits which do not conflict with or in any manner or degree impair, impugn or transcend the sole governing authority of the session. The session, however, while supreme in its sphere, is not an autocratic or irresponsible body, and any abuses of its power may be redressed in the higher courts.

7. Is not every organization in the local church wholly subject to the session of the local church? We recommend that the Assembly answer "Yes."

8. Has the General Assembly any authority to direct that in the local churches the Sunday school shall be under the control of the deacons? Or in anywise deprive the session of its supreme authority in the local affairs of the local church? We recommend that the Assembly answer "No."

(M. G. A. 1928, p. 46.)

CHAPTER VII

THE PARTICULAR CHURCH

83. **Early history.** Presbyterians trace the visible Church back to Abraham and his family. It was organized by God, under an ecclesiastical covenant. This visible Church is practically the same in both the Old and the New Testaments. It has the same nature and membership in both Testaments, with the exception of such changes of circumstances and conditions as were necessary to the change of dispensations.

Under the Gospel, the requirements for church membership are more spiritual than under the law and imply a larger gift of the Holy Ghost. The seal was also changed. In the Old Testament it was "circumcision"; under the New Testament it was "baptism." While the form of the seal was changed, the thing signified was not changed. The church under the New Testament became more catholic and universal. The Gospel is to be preached "to all that are afar off."

84. **Membership.** "A particular church consists of a number of professing Christians, with their offspring, associated together for divine worship and godly living, agreeably to the Scriptures, and submitting to the lawful government of Christ's Kingdom." (B. Ch. O., par. 20.)

85. **Officers.** "Its officers are the pastor, the ruling elders, and the deacons." (B. Ch. O., par. 21.)

86. **Jurisdiction.** "Its jurisdiction being a joint power, is lodged in the hands of the church Session, consisting of the pastor and ruling elders." (B. Ch. O., par. 22.)

87. **Ordinances.** "The ordinances established by Christ, the Head, in His Church, are prayer; singing praises; reading, expounding and preaching the Word

of God; administering the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper; public solemn fasting and thanksgiving; catechising; making offerings for the relief of the poor and for other pious uses; and exercising discipline." (B. Ch. O., par. 24.)

88. **Method of organization.** The method of organizing a Presbyterian church differs in some respect from that of some other ecclesiastical bodies. The method herewith outlined is, we believe, the scriptural method.

89. **How organized.** "A church, under the Presbyterian system, can be organized only by the authority of Presbytery. This may be done in one of three ways:

"1. By the Presbytery directly.

"2. By a commission.

"3. By an evangelist to whom the Presbytery may give the authority to organize churches."

(B. Ch. O., par. 26.)

90. **Testimonials presented.** "Testimonials shall be presented by such persons as are members of the church, if there be any, and applicants for admission to the church on profession of faith in Christ shall, on satisfactory examination, be received." (B. Ch. O., par. 26 [1].)

91. **Covenant entered into.** "Those who present themselves for membership in the church must enter into covenant, answering affirmatively the following: "Do you, in reliance on God for strength, solemnly promise and covenant that you will walk together as an organized church, on the principles of the faith and order of the Presbyterian Church, and that you will study the purity and harmony of the whole body?" (B. Ch. O., par. 26 [2].)

92. **Declaration made by presiding minister.** The presiding minister shall then say: "I now pronounce

and declare that you are constituted a church according to the Word of God and the faith and order of the Presbyterian Church in the United States. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen." (B. Ch. O., par. 26 [3].)

93. Officers elected. "Ruling elders and deacons shall be elected, if the way be clear, and steps taken for their examination, ordination and installation." (B. Ch. O., par. 4, 26.)

94. Church enrolled by Presbytery. It is sometimes impossible to complete the organization by the election, examination, ordination and installation of ruling elders and deacons at the time the church is organized. The church should be reported to the Presbytery and be enrolled by Presbytery, even though it does not have officers. (A. D. 1922, p. 84; M. G. A. 1897, p. 40.)

CHAPTER VIII

THE CHURCH MEMBERS

95. Conditions of church membership. "The members of this visible Church catholic are all those persons in every nation, together with their children, who make profession of the holy religion of Christ, and of submission to his laws." (B. Ch. O., par. 3.)

"Those only who have made a profession of faith in Christ are entitled to all the rights and privileges of the Church." (B. Ch. O., par. 29.)

96. Conditions of membership most liberal. "In order to become a member of the Presbyterian Church, one is only required to make a profession of faith in Jesus Christ and to receive Jesus Christ as his Saviour. Nothing could be broader than that. The Presbyterian Church is willing to receive a member from any other evangelical church simply on the statement from the other church that this member is in good and regular standing in that church, and there is absolutely no other requirement. The Presbyterian Church accepts as valid the baptism of any other evangelical church. The Presbyterian Church recognizes as valid the ordination of ministers in all other evangelical churches. The Presbyterian Church invites all members of all other evangelical churches to the communion table. The Presbyterian Church cordially co-operates with all other evangelical churches in Christian service. It would be difficult to think of a broader platform than this." ("Presbyterianism," Lingle, p. 29.)

97. Good and regular standing of a Church member. "Every member of our Church is entitled to a dismission in good standing unless process be commenced against him, it being left to the sound discretion of the session from the circumstances of each particular case as to the propriety of tabling charges against him or not." (A. D. 1922, p. 18; M. G. A. 1861, p. 11.)

98. **The W. S. Turner judicial case.** In 1881, in the W. S. Turner judicial case, the General Assembly rendered the following judicial decision on members in good standing:

"1. That judicial admonition is a censure whose legal force terminates when it is inflicted.

"2. That W. S. Turner was not, therefore, under judicial censure when he applied for a letter of dismission.

"3. That he was in 'good and regular standing' in the sense that he was not under judicial process or censure.

"4. That the said Turner, not being under judicial process or censure, was entitled to a letter of dismission, if he desired it, to a church in connection with the Assembly.

"5. That the usage of the Church is to grant a letter of dismission to members in good and regular standing, to churches not connected with this Assembly, but that such a letter cannot be demanded as a matter of legal right."

(A. D. 1910, p. 669; M. G. A. 1881, p. 378.)

99. **Baptized non-communicants.** "All non-communicants of all ages baptized into the folds of the church and living in its bounds, should be included in the report of the church on 'baptized non-communicants'; also persons living in the bounds of the church and belonging to the congregation, known to have been baptized in other Presbyterian churches should be included." (A. D. 1922, p. 22; M. G. A. 1892, p. 434.)

100. **Privileges of baptized non-communicants.** "All baptized persons are entitled to the watchful care, instruction, and government of the Church, even though

they are adults, and have made no profession of their faith in Christ." (B. Ch. O., par. 28.)

101. Baptized children included in letters of dismission. "The Assembly enjoins the Presbyteries to require church sessions to include their baptized non-communing children in their letters of dismission of members." (A. D. 1922, p. 22; M. G. A. 1873, p. 312.)

102. Resident and non-resident communicants. For a number of years, Sessions were required to report "resident communicants," "non-resident communicants" and "total communicants," but in 1926, the Assembly in revising its sessional blanks omitted the columns for resident and non-resident communicants. When the Assembly adopted the revised Book of Church Order in 1925, a provision was made for a "Roll of Retired Members." This to a certain degree absorbed the non-resident communicant roll. Paragraph 298 requires that the non-resident members shall be reported with the resident members in the total communicants. (B. Ch. O., par. 298.)

103. Definition of resident, non-resident and retired members.

Resident: "One residing within the bounds of the Congregation to which he belongs."

Non-resident: "One whose address is known, but who has for twelve months neglected to transfer his membership."

Retired: "One whose address has for two years been unknown to the Session of the church to which he belongs, or to any one absent for one year, address known or unknown, who does not support the church, takes no interest in the work, and refuses to move his membership." (M. G. A. 1927, p. 49.)

104. Distinction between communing members and non-communing members. "Our Book of Church Order divides the members of a church into communing members and non-communing members. Communing members are those who have made a profession of faith in Christ, and have united with that particular church. Non-communing members are children of communing members who have been baptized, but who have not made a profession of faith and united with the church. The Book of Church Order always makes it clear when it is referring to non-communing members. When it refers to resident communing members, it sometimes speaks of them as resident communing members and sometimes simply as resident members. The Assembly, therefore, replies that the term 'resident communing members' and 'resident members' are synonymous." (M. G. A. 1927, p. 49.)

105. Non-communing members defined. "Baptized persons who have not been admitted to full communion" are defined as non-communing members.

106. Non-attendance by members not justified. "Dislike for a minister or officers, not in accord with the management of the church, or dislike for any of its officers and members do not justify a member in not attending the services of the sanctuary." (A. D. 1922, p. 26; M. G. A. 1897, p. 42.)

107. Willful absence from the Lord's Table an offense. "When members do not attend the services because of dislike of either minister, officers, etc., and do not attend the Lord's Supper, this is always an offense. In such a case the Session should proceed according to the requirements of the Rules of Discipline." (A. D. 1922, p. 26; M. G. A. 1897, p. 42.)

108. Effect of a church member's withdrawing to another church. "When a member or officer shall renounce the communion of this Church by joining some other evangelical church, if in good standing, the irregularity shall be recorded, and his name erased. But if charges are pending against him, they shall be communicated to the church which he has joined. If the denomination be heretical, an officer shall have his name stricken from the roll, and all authority to exercise his office derived from this Church shall be withdrawn from him; but a private member shall not be otherwise noticed than as above prescribed." (B. Ch. O., par. 258.)

109. Relation of infants of believers. "The infant seed of believers are, through the covenant and by right of birth, members of the Church. Hence they are entitled to baptism, and to the pastoral oversight, instruction, and government of the Church, with a view to their embracing Christ, and thus possessing personally all the benefits of the covenant." (B. Ch. O., par. 27.)

110. Relation of adult baptized non-communicants to Church. "While such persons fail to avail themselves of their privileges, their relationship to the Church is not thereby severed, but they are still under its care." (A. D. 1922, p. 22; M. G. A. 1890, p. 24.)

111. Members received on restatement. "When the church of which he is a member has no Session, or for other good reasons it seems impossible for the member to secure a certificate of dismission, he may be received by the Session upon other satisfactory testimonials, in which case the church of which he was a member shall be duly notified." (B. Ch. O., par. 297.)

The General Assembly declared in 1921, "if such 'other testimonials,' including the candidate's statement, are satisfactory to the Session, the member should be reported as received upon certificate." (A. D. 1922, p. 19; M. G. A. 1921, p. 69.)

CHAPTER IX

CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

112. Object of meeting. The object of the congregational meeting is for the purpose of transacting such business as has not been entrusted to the representatives previously chosen. Among these items is the election of a pastor, ruling elders and deacons. Such other matters as are placed in the congregation by the law of the church may be transacted by the congregation in regular meeting.

113. Meetings called by the Session. "Whenever it may seem for the best interests of the church that a congregational meeting should be held, the Session shall call such meeting and give public notice, and no business shall be transacted at such meeting except what is stated in the notice. The Session shall always call a congregational meeting when requested in writing to do so by one-fourth of the communing members of the church." (B. Ch. O., par. 153.)

The Session alone can call a congregational meeting. The Book of Church Order does not say in exact words that the Session alone can call a congregational meeting, but paragraph 153 makes it clear that the Session alone can call a congregational meeting.

The General Assembly says, "It seems to follow that it is competent for the Session to call congregational meetings for any proper purpose." (A. D. 1922, p. 34; M. G. A. 1876, p. 240.)

114. Number of members necessary to request call for congregational meeting. "If one-fourth of the persons entitled to vote shall at any time request the Session to call a congregational meeting for the purpose of electing additional officers, it shall be the duty of the Session to call such a meeting." (B. Ch. O., par. 143.)

115. Purposes for which a congregational meeting may be called.

1. The election of ruling elders and deacons.
2. The election of pastors.
3. The election of trustees.
4. The purchase, sale, etc., of church property.
5. To give such instructions to trustees and board of deacons for change by enlargement, additions, improvements, etc., of church property.
6. Moving church or manse to another location, etc.
7. Changing pastor's salary.
8. An occasion may arise for the congregation to meet for some other purpose. The Session must decide whether under our law the object is such that the congregation should be called to consider it. Their action must be based upon law, not on whim or prejudice, or even their own judgment as to the wisdom of letting the congregation handle the matter. "As the purposes of congregational meetings, in all cases, must be presumed to relate, more or less directly, to the spiritual interests of the congregation; and as the power is vested in the Session 'to concert the best measures for promoting the spiritual interests of the congregation,' it seems to follow that it is competent for the sessions to call congregational meetings for any proper purpose." "In case the subject to be considered at the congregational meeting be such as to prevent the pastor, from motives of delicacy, to preside, it is competent for the meeting to choose its own presiding officer." (A. D. 1922, p. 34; M. G. A. 1876, p. 240.)

116. Business to be transacted. By parity of reasoning from the rules governing a Presbytery, a congregational meeting can transact only the business for which it has been called. "No business shall be transacted except what is stated in the notice." (B. Ch. O., par. 153.) It can adjourn from Sabbath to Sabbath until the business for which it has been called has been completed. The congregation cannot adjourn from Sabbath to Sabbath to transact *any business which may come before it.* The congregation can meet only as it is called by the Session in accordance with the rules of the Book of Church Order, paragraph 153.

117. One week necessary for notice of meeting for election of officers. "Public notice shall be given of the time, place and purpose of this meeting at least one week prior to the appointed time." (B. Ch. O., par. 143.)

118. Due time to be given. The time specified for giving notice of congregational meetings in paragraph 143 of the Book of Church Order is one week. The time limit is omitted in paragraph 153 of the Book of Church Order, which relates to congregational meeting. It simply says "public notice" shall be given.

119. Pastor, moderator of congregational meeting. "The pastor is, by virtue of his office, moderator of congregational meetings. If there is no pastor, the Session shall appoint one of their number to call the meeting to order and to preside until the congregation shall elect their presiding officer." (B. Ch. O., par. 144.)

120. Moderator of congregational meeting. "The pastor shall be moderator of congregational meetings by virtue of his office. If it should be impracticable or inexpedient for him to preside, or if there is no pastor, the Session shall appoint one of their number to call the meeting to order and to preside until the congregation shall elect their presiding officer, who may be a minister of the Presbyterian Church in the United States or any male member of that particular church." (B. Ch. O., par. 155.)

121. Inviting a visiting minister to preside. When a minister visits a vacant church to preach or hold a meeting of the Session or Congregation, if he has not been appointed by the Presbytery to act as moderator of that Session, the Session should by vote invite him to preside. A record of this should be made in the minutes of the Session. Sessions of vacant churches often take it for granted that the minister has this authority and will perform these duties without being asked. Much embarrassment will be saved if the Session will remember this.

122. Ruling elder of another church moderating. There is nothing in the Form of Government which prohibits the congregation from inviting a ruling elder outside of their own Session to moderate a congregational meeting, but this is inexpedient except in extraordinary cases. (A. D. 1922, p. 34; M. G. A. 1890, p. 46.)

123. Quorum of a congregational meeting. "A quorum of the congregational meeting shall consist of one-fourth of the resident communing members, if the church has not more than one hundred such members, and of one-sixth of the resident communing members if a church has more than one hundred such members." (B. Ch. O., par. 154.)

124. Persons eligible to vote. "All communing members in good and regular standing, but no others, are entitled to vote in the election of church officers in the churches to which they respectively belong. When a majority of all the voters present, cast their votes for a person for either of these offices, he shall be considered elected."

"All the communing members of a particular church, and they only, are entitled to vote." (B. Ch. O., par. 145, 152.)

This was reaffirmed by a later deliverance. (M. G. A. 1927, p. 49.)

125. Proxy voting. The Presbyterian Church does not permit voting by proxy. (A. D. 1922, p. 34; M. G. A. 1906, p. 24.)

126. Financial supporters not to vote. Individuals, not members of a particular church, who are contributors to the support of a church and pastor cannot vote in calling a pastor or in the dissolution of the pastoral relation.

127. Pastor not a member of the congregation. "Not being a member of the congregation, he has no right to vote even in case of a tie." "The pastor is not a member of the congregation, and has not the right to cast the deciding vote of the congregation in case of a tie." (M. G. A. 1843, p. 176; M. G. A. 1927, p. 49.)

128. Method of voting to be determined by congregation. "The congregation may vote to proceed by nominations or by private ballot without nominations, as it may prefer." (B. Ch. O., par. 146.)

129. Election by ballot not required. Our Church does not require election by ballot. This is left to the discretion of the congregation.

130. Majority of votes necessary to elect. "In every case, a majority of all the voters present shall be required to elect." (B. Ch. O., par. 146.)

131. A clerk to be elected. "A clerk shall be elected by the congregation to serve at that meeting or for a definite period, whose duty shall be to keep correct minutes of the proceedings and of all business transacted and to preserve these minutes in a permanent form after they have been attested by the moderator and the clerk of the meeting. He shall also send a copy of these minutes to the Session of the Church." (B. Ch. O., par. 156.)

132. Procedure when call is not unanimous. "On the election of a pastor, if it appears that a large minority of the voters are averse to the candidate who has received a majority of votes, and cannot be induced to concur in the call, the moderator shall endeavor to dissuade the majority from prosecuting it further; but if the electors be nearly or quite unanimous, or if the majority shall insist upon their right to call a pastor, the moderator shall proceed to draw a call in due form, and to have it subscribed by them, certifying at the same time in writing the number of those who do not concur in the call, and any facts of importance, all of which proceedings shall be laid before the Presbytery, together with the call." (B. Ch. O., 125.)

133. Form for a call. "The call shall be in the following, or like form, viz.:

"The church of............................., being on sufficient grounds well satisfied of the ministerial qualifications of you, ..., and having good hopes from our knowledge of your labors that your ministrations in the Gospel will be profitable to our spiritual interests, do earnestly call you to undertake the pastoral office in said congregation, promising you, in the discharge of your duty, all proper support, encouragement and obedience in the Lord. And that you may be free from worldly cares and avocations, we hereby promise and oblige ourselves to pay you the sum of $............a year in regular monthly (or quarterly) payments (and a manse), during the time of your being and continuing the regular pastor of this church.

"In testimony whereof we have respectfully subscribed our names this.................day of..............................., A. D..............

"Attest:

"I, A. B., having moderated the congregational meeting which extended a call to Rev.................... for his ministerial services, do certify that the call has been made in all respects according to the rules laid down in the Book of Church Order, and that the persons who signed the foregoing call were authorized to do so by vote of the congregation.

....

Moderator of the meeting."

(B. Ch. O., par. 126.)

134. Method of subscription to call. "If any church shall choose to subscribe its call by the ruling elders and deacons, or by a committee, it shall be at liberty to do so. But it shall, in such case, be fully certified to the Presbytery by the minister or other person who presided, that the persons signing have been appointed for that purpose by a public vote of the church, and that the call has been in all other respects prepared as above directed." (B. Ch. O., par. 127.)

135. Commissioners to prosecute call. "One or more commissioners shall be appointed by the church to present and prosecute the call before Presbytery." (B. Ch. O., par. 128.)

136. Procedure when minister belongs to different Presbytery from the church. "If the call be to a minister, licentiate, or candidate of another Presbytery, the commissioners appointed to prosecute the call shall produce an attested certificate from their own Presbytery that it has been laid before that body and found in order, and that permission has been granted them to prosecute it before the Presbytery to which he belongs." (B. Ch. O., par. 129.)

137. Procedure before the Presbytery. "A congregation desiring to call a pastor from his charge, shall, by its commissioners, represent to the Presbytery the ground on which it pleads his removal. The Presbytery, having heard all the parties, may, upon viewing the whole case, either recommend them to desist from prosecuting the call; or may order it to be delivered to the minister to whom it is addressed, with or without advice; or may decline to place the call in his hands; as it shall appear most for the peace and edification of the Church at large; or it may refer the whole matter to the Synod for advice and direction; and no pastor shall be transferred without his own consent. If the parties are not ready to have the matter issued at the meeting then in progress, a written citation shall be given the minister and his church to appear before the Presbytery at its next meeting, which citation shall be read from the pulpit on the Sabbath after the sermon, at least two Sabbaths before the intended meeting." (B. Ch. O., par. 130.)

"If the congregation, or other field of labor, to which a minister or licentiate, or candidate is called, be under the jurisdiction of a different Presbytery, on his acceptance of a call he shall be furnished with the proper testimonials, and required to repair immediately to that Presbytery, in order that he may be regularly inducted into his office." (B. Ch. O., par. 131.)

138. **Recording congregational meetings.** A record should be made in the records of the Session that the congregational meeting was ordered to be held. The question has often been raised as to whether any note should be made in the records of the Session of the fact that the congregational meeting was held. While the full record of the congregational meeting is usually made in a separate book or in the back of the records of the Session, the writer has always felt that some mention should be made in the records of the Session, stating that the congregational meeting was

held in accordance with the order of the Session. If on the date mentioned there is a simple record made that the congregation did meet, and that the business for which the congregation was called was transacted and a reference made to the place where the congregational meetings are recorded, the records as a whole will be much more intelligible. It is perfectly legal for the Session to direct that the minutes of the congregational meeting be entered in the Session book following the minutes of the Session ordering such meeting. This will give a historical continuity which is valuable when the information is desired. Both methods described above are used by Sessions.

CHAPTER X

THE MINISTER

139. Preliminary statement. "The office of minister or pastor is the first in the church, both for dignity and usefulness." (B. Ch. O., par. 33.) In the epistle to Timothy the apostle uses various words to describe the names, authority, qualifications, duties and rewards of the minister. Also in Ephesians 4:11, 12, 13. "And He gave some, apostles; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

To this may be added the following from the Confession of Faith: "Unto this catholic visible Church, Christ hath given the ministry, oracles, and ordinances of God, for the gathering and perfecting of the saints, in this life, to the end of the world: and doth by his own presence and Spirit, according to his promise, make them effectual thereunto." (C. of F., Ch. XXV, Sec. III.)

140. Names and duties given the minister. "The person who fills this office has in the Scriptures different titles expressive of his various duties.

BISHOP—As he has the oversight of the flock of Christ, he is termed bishop.

PASTOR—As he feeds them with spiritual food, he is termed pastor.

MINISTER—As he serves Christ in the Church, he is termed minister.

PRESBYTER—As it is his duty to be grave and prudent, and an example to the flock, and to govern well in the house and Kingdom of Christ, he is termed Presbyter or elder.

AMBASSADOR—As he is sent to declare the will of God to sinners, and to beseech them to be reconciled to God through Christ, he is termed ambassador.

EVANGELIST—As he bears glad tidings of salvation to the ignorant and perishing, he is termed evangelist.

PREACHER—As he stands to proclaim the Gospel, he is termed preacher.

TEACHER—As he expounds the Word, and by sound doctrine both exhorts and convinces the gainsayer, he is termed teacher.

STEWARD—As he dispenses the manifold grace of God, and the ordinances instituted by Christ, he is termed steward of the mysteries of God.

These titles do not indicate different grades of office, but all describe one and the same officer." (B. Ch. O., par. 33.)

141. Qualifications of a minister who fills this office. "He must have:

"1. A competency of human learning.

"2. He must be blameless in life.

"3. He must be sound in the faith.

"4. He must be apt to teach.

"5. He should exhibit sobriety and holiness of life becoming the Gospel.

"6. He should rule his own house well.

"7. He should have a good report of them that are without." (B. Ch. O., par. 34.)

142. Offices of a minister. 1. "When a minister is called to labor as a pastor, it belongs to his office to pray for his flock, as the mouth of the people unto God; to feed the flock, by reading, expounding, and preaching the Word; to direct the congregation in singing the praises of God; to administer the sacraments; to catechise the children and youth; to visit officially the people, devoting especial attention to the poor, the sick, the afflicted, and the dying; and with the other Elders to exercise the joint power of government." (B. Ch. O., par. 36.)

2. "When a minister is appointed to be a teacher in a school of divinity, or to give instruction in the doctrines and duties of religion to youth assembled in a college or university, it appertains to his office to take a pastoral oversight of those committed to his charge, and to be diligent in sowing the seed of the Word and gathering the fruit thereof, as one who watches for souls." (B. Ch. O., par. 37.)

3. When a minister is ordained as an evangelist, "he is commissioned to preach the Word and administer the sacraments in foreign countries, frontier settlements, or the destitute parts of the Church; and to him may be entrusted power to organize churches, and ordain ruling elders and deacons therein." (B. Ch. O., par. 38.)

4. "When a minister is called to labor through the press, or in any other like needful work, it shall be incumbent on him to make full proof of his ministry by disseminating the Gospel for the edification of the church." (B. Ch. O., par. 39.)

143. **Membership.** The membership of a minister is in the Presbytery. (See par. 332 under Presbytery.) The pastor is not a member of the congregation. (M. G. A. 1927, p. 49; see par. 127.)

144. **Visitation of the sick.** "The power of the prayer of faith is great, and Christians therefore should make entreaty for the sick at the throne of heavenly grace, and should also seek God's blessing upon all proper means which are being employed for their recovery. Moreover, when persons are sick, their

minister, or some officer of the church, should be notified, that the minister, officers and members may unite their prayers in behalf of the sick. It is the privilege and duty of the pastor to visit the sick and to minister to their physical, mental, and spiritual welfare. In view of the varying circumstances of the sick, the minister should use discretion in the performance of this duty." (B. Ch. O., par. 370.)

145. The burial of the dead. "The services proper for such an occasion are: The singing of appropriate psalms or hymns; the reading of some suitable portion or portions of Scripture, with such remarks as it may seem proper to the minister to make; prayer, in which the bereaved shall be especially remembered, and God's grace sought on their behalf, that they may be sustained and comforted in their sorrow, and that their affliction may be blessed to their spiritual good. These funeral services are to be left largely to the discretion of the minister performing them, but he should always remember that the proper object of the service is the worship of God and the consolation of the living." (B. Ch. O., par. 371-372.)

CHAPTER XI

THE RULING ELDER

146. Historical statement. The office of elder has been the one permanent office in the Church in both the Old and New Testaments. As far back as the time of Abraham we have evidence of its existence. (Gen. 24:2; 50:7, etc.)

When the ceremonial law and ritual were given, we find that the elders were recognized as the representatives of the people. They were organized into courts with definite jurisdiction. The seventy elders were the highest court and were constituted as a court of appeal. (Numbers 11:16, 25; Exodus 24:1.) When the synagogues were established, the history shows that these elders were continued and clothed with a certain amount of authority in connection with the synagogue. They are called the rulers of the synagogue.

When New Testament churches were organized, elders were elected. When the converts were all Jews and connected with a synagogue, the whole synagogue became Christian and the new church retained the form of government already in existence in the synagogue. When the converts were Gentiles, a new organization was effected and elders were elected. There were elders under the law in the Old Testament and under the Gospel in the New Testament. Under both Testaments they were possessed of gifts and a commission to rule. In the Presbyterian Church they are called ruling elders. (B. Ch. O., par. 40.)

147. Representatives of the people. The power of the Church is vested in the whole body. The church or congregation exercises this power in choosing its officers. When ruling elders have been chosen the government is transferred to the ruling elders, who now become the representatives of the people. When a church elects a minister as pastor he becomes moderator of the Session and becomes, with the ruling elders, a representative of the church or congregation.

148. **Church government in the hands of Church officers.** "The Lord Jesus, as King and Head of His Church, hath therein appointed a government in the hands of church officers, distinct from the civil magistrate." (C. of F., Ch. XXX, Sec. I.)

149. **Scriptural qualifications of ruling elders.** (I Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:7-9.)

1. Exemplary husband and father. (vss. 2 and 4, 5.)
2. Ability to teach. (v. 2.)
3. Abstainer from strong drink and strong speech. (v. 3.)
4. Experienced and humble. (v. 6.)
5. Having an unsullied reputation. (v. 7.)

150. **Qualifications required.** "Those who fill this office ought to be blameless in life and sound in the faith; they should be men of wisdom and discretion; and by the holiness of their walk and conversation should be examples to the flock." (B. Ch. O., par. 42.)

151. **Chief function of ruling elders.** "These ruling elders possess the same authority and eligibility to office in the courts of the Church as the ministers of the Word. They should, moreover, cultivate zealously their aptness to teach the Bible and should improve every opportunity of doing so, to the end that destitute places, mission points, and churches without pastors may be supplied with religious services." (B. Ch. O., par. 41.)

152. **Office perpetual in the church.** "The office of ruling elder is perpetual. Nor can it be laid aside at pleasure; nor can any person be degraded from this

office but by deposition after regular trial." (B. Ch. O., par. 149.)

153. Method of election. "The Session must order a meeting of the congregation when it is desired to have additional ruling elders or deacons. Public notice shall be given of the time, place and purpose of the meeting at least one week prior to the appointed time." (B. Ch. O., par. 143; par. 121-130.)

154. Examination before ordination. "When any person has been elected to the office of ruling elder, or deacon, the Session shall confer with him as to his acceptance, and if he accepts shall at an appointed time examine him as to his religious experience, his knowledge of the system of doctrine, government, and discipline contained in the Standards of the Church, and the duties of the office to which he has been elected. If the examination is approved, the Session shall appoint a day for his ordination and installation." (B. Ch. O., par. 147.)

155. Order of service for ordination and installation. The following order should be preserved in the ordination and installation of ruling elders:

1. A day should be fixed by the pastor and Session.

2. A sermon should be preached by the pastor, if convenient.

3. The presiding minister should state the warrant and nature of the office and duties.

4. *Questions proposed to the candidate:*

"(1) Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be the Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice?

"(2) Do you sincerely receive and adopt the Confession of Faith and the Catechisms of this Church, as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures; and do you further promise that if at any time you find yourself out of accord with any of the fundamentals of this system of doctrine, you will, on your own initiative, make known to your Session the change which has taken place in your views since the assumption of this ordination vow?

"(3) Do you approve the government and discipline of the Presbyterian Church in the United States?

"(4) Do you accept the office of ruling elder (or deacon, as the case may be) in this church, and promise faithfully to perform all the duties thereof, and to endeavor by the grace of God to adorn the profession of the Gospel in your life, and to set a worthy example before the church of which God has made you an officer?

"(5) Do you promise subjection to your brethren in the Lord?

"(6) Do you promise to study the peace, unity, edification and purity of the Church?" (B. Ch. O., par. 148.)

All these questions must be answered in the affirmative.

5. *Question proposed to the members of the church:*

"Do you, the members of this church, acknowledge and receive this brother as a ruling elder (or deacon), and do you promise to yield him all that honor, encouragement and obedience in the Lord to which his office, according to the Word of God and the constitution of this church, entitles him?" (B. Ch. O., par. 148.)

This question must be answered by the congregation in the affirmative by the holding up of their right hands.

6. *Minister and Session must ordain.*

"The minister shall proceed to set apart the candidate with prayer and the laying on of the hands of the Session, to the office of ruling elder (or deacon)." (B. Ch. O., par. 148.)

7. *Right hand of fellowship to be given.*

"Prayer being ended, the members of the Session (and the deacons, if the case be that of a deacon) shall take the newly ordained officer by the hand, saying, in words to this effect: 'We give you the right hand of fellowship, to take part in this office with us.' " (B. Ch. O., par. 148.)

8. *Formal declaration of ordination and installation.*

"The minister shall then say: 'I now pronounce and declare that A. B. has been regularly elected, ordained and installed a ruling elder (or deacon) in this church, agreeably to the Word of God, and according to the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in the United States; and that as such he is entitled to all encouragement, honor and obedience in the Lord: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.' " (B. Ch. O., par. 148.)

9. *Exhortation to the Church.*

"After pronouncing the candidate regularly elected, ordained and installed a ruling elder (or deacon), the minister shall give to the ruling elder (or deacon) and to the church an exhortation suited to the occasion." (B. Ch. O., par. 148.)

156. Charge may be delivered by a ruling elder. A ruling elder may deliver a charge to the people or to the pastor in installation. (B. Ch. O., par. 138; A. D. 1922, p. 43; M. G. A. 1898, p. 223.)

157. Status of officer to church when relation dissolved by Presbytery. Presbytery may dissolve the relation between the ruling elder and a particular church without prejudice and without petition. The same is true of the relation of the deacon. (A. D. 1922, p. 72; M. G. A. 1894, p. 196.)

This action of the Assembly places the Presbytery in the place of the Session, and the same steps should be taken by the Presbytery that the Session would in the case of dissolving the relation between an elder or deacon and a particular church. The Presbytery should be guided by the order of procedure given in paragraph 149, B. Ch. O.

158. Length of membership in Presbytery. "The term of a ruling elder's service continues as a member of Presbytery from one regular (or stated) meeting to the next regular (or stated) meeting, unless the Session otherwise direct." (A. D. 1922, pp. 68, 102; M. G. A. 1872, p. 164; 1888, p. 424.)

159. Suspended officer restored to membership not thereby restored to office. "When an elder has been suspended from church privileges, for an offense, and again restored to the privileges of the church, he is not restored to his office as a ruling elder. The two things are distinct; and since an elder, as well as a minister, may be suspended from his office, and not from the communion of the Church, so there may be reasons for continuing his suspension from the office after he is restored to the privileges of the Church. He cannot be restored to the functions of his office without a special and express act of the Session for that purpose, with the acquiescence of the church." (Baird's Digest, p. 42; M. G. A. 1836, p. 263; B. Ch. O., par. 252.)

160. A minister not eligible as a ruling elder. An ordained minister may not accept and exercise the office of ruling elder in a church belonging to the same Presbytery of which he is a member. (Baird's Digest, p. 65; M. G. A. 1856, p. 522.)

161. Releasing of officers from active duty. "A ruling elder or deacon may have reasons which he deems valid for being released from the active duties of his office. In such a case the Session, after conference with him and careful consideration of the matter, may, if it thinks proper, accept his resignation and dissolve the official relation which exists between him and the church." (B. Ch. O., par. 149.)

162. Officers sometimes unacceptable to the church. "Or a ruling elder or deacon, though chargeable with neither heresy nor immorality, may become unacceptable in his official capacity to a majority of the church which he serves. In such a case the church may take the initiative by a majority vote at a regularly called congregational meeting, and request the Session to dissolve the official relationship between the church and the officer without censure. The Session, after conference with the ruling elder, or deacon, and after careful consideration, may use its discretion as to dissolving the official relationship. In either case the Session shall report its action to the congregation." (B. Ch. O., par. 149.)

163. Status of officer dismissed to another church. "When an elder or deacon voluntarily and permanently removes beyond the bounds of a congregation, he is disqualified from discharging the functions of his office, and is no longer to be considered as an acting elder or deacon." (A. D. 1922, p. 69; M. G. A. 1865, p. 363.) He does not become an officer in the church to which he has been dismissed. He may be elected and installed there without ordination.

164. Status of officer returning letter to church. An elder or deacon receiving a letter of dismission, but subsequently returning the letter, is reinstated into full communion and resumes his functions as an officer. (A. D. 1922, p. 70; M. G. A. 1876, p. 238.)

165. Status of officer when re-elected to office. "When a ruling elder or deacon who has been released from his official relation is again elected to his office in the same or another church, he shall be installed after the above form, with the omission of ordination." (B. Ch. O., par. 150.)

166. Effect of failure of ruling elder or deacon to perform his duty. "When a ruling elder or deacon makes such change of residence that he cannot or does not for a period of two years perform the duties of his office, his official relationship shall be dissolved by the Session and the action reported to the congregation." (B. Ch. O., par. 151.)

CHAPTER XII

THE DEACON

167. Origin of the office. "Our church, in common with all the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches, discovers the origin of the office of deacon in the election of the seven, of which Luke tells us in the sixth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. Upon this narrative we are almost wholly dependent for an understanding of the nature and duties of the diaconate. A study of the setting and the details of this narrative seems to yield the conception of the office presented in this report. The early Christian community, as Luke describes it, exhibited a conscious unity, a warm sympathy among its members, a fellowship of love and a generous relief of each other's needs. They 'were of one heart and soul; and not one of them said that aught of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.' The word that expresses all this is 'koinonia,' translated in our version 'fellowship or communion,' and representing one of the great ideas of the New Testament.

"This 'koinonia,' or 'communion,' was effected by the grace of the Holy Spirit, and constituted the Christians a new and distinct community. As is set forth in Chapter XXVI of our Confession on the Communion of Saints, one way in which this communion of saints manifests itself is 'in relieving each other in outward things.' This was true of these primitive Christians in Jerusalem; and to the same effect is the teaching of Paul when writing to the Romans and Corinthians about the great collection for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem in which he busied himself on his third missionary journey. (Rom. 15:25-28; I Cor. 16: 1-4; II Cor., Chapters 8 and 9.) Paul calls this collection 'koinonia.' (Romans 15:26.) It was to him a mark and proof of the Christian fellowship which united Jew and Gentile and transcended all differences of race and culture. This was the reason for Paul's intense interest in the collection and his earnest desire that it should be acceptable to the saints in Jerusalem. The deacon makes his appearance when the Christian community is translating its fellowship into practical form and becomes the organ of this fellowship. It seems a fair inference that the fundamental idea of the diaconate is that it represents the communion of saints. This does not mean that it is the exclusive representative, nor need it mean that the range of its representation activities is limited to meeting the special need which led to the creation of the office. The specific activity recorded in the Acts is but an illustration of a principle capable of development and application in many ways.

"Luke's picture of the church of the early days paints a community instinct with the mind of Christ. He had an intense sympathy with men in their manifold sorrows and distresses, and He carried on a vast work of relief. He was the great servant of humanity. 'I am among you,' says He, 'as he that serveth.' The individual Christian and the Christian community are to perpetuate and imitate His sympathy and service. This was characteristic of the primitive Christians, and the deacon was appointed to be their heart and hand in sympathetic service. The very name of Deacon summons him to this: it means 'servant,' and links him with the Son of Man who 'came not to be served, but to serve.' The deacon's office, then, represents the compassionate spirit, and the beneficent work of the Church." (M. G. A. 1921, p. 189.)

168. **A perpetual officer in the Church.** "The office of deacon is set forth in the Scriptures as ordinary and perpetual in the Church. The office is one of sym-

pathy and service, after the example of the Lord Jesus; it expresses also the communion of saints, especially in their helping one another in time of need." (B. Ch. O., par. 44.)

169. Qualifications. I Timothy 3:8-13.

1. Temperate. (v. 8.)
2. Conscientious believer. (v. 9.)
3. Capable. (v. 10.)
4. Home life above reproach. (vs. 11, 12.)

170. Duties defined. "It is the duty of the deacons to minister to those who are in need, to the sick, to the friendless, and to any who may be in distress. It is their duty also to develop the grace of liberality in the members of the church, to devise effective methods of collecting the gifts of the people, and to distribute these gifts among the objects to which they are contributed. They shall have the care of the property of the congregation, both real and personal, and shall keep in proper repair the church edifice and other buildings belonging to the congregation. In matters of special importance affecting the property of the church, they cannot take final action without the consent of the congregation. In the discharge of their duties the deacons are under the supervision and authority of the Session. In a church in which it is impossible for any reason to secure deacons, the duties of the office shall devolve upon the ruling elders." (B. Ch. O., par. 45; also par. 23.)

171. Method of election. The same steps necessary to the election of ruling elders are necessary to the election of deacons. See Chapter V, item "Election of Ruling Elders." (B. Ch. O., par. 143-144.)

172. Ordination and installation. Deacons are ordained and installed in the same manner as ruling elders. See item under "Ruling Elder." (B. Ch. O., par. 65, 145-148.)

173. Should be organized as a board. "The deacons of a particular church shall be organized as a board, of which the pastor shall be an advisory member." (B. Ch. O., par. 47.)

174. Officers of the board.

1. A chairman.
2. A secretary.
3. A treasurer.
4. A benevolence treasurer.

Where the church is small, the treasurer may handle not only the funds for current expenses, but also for benevolences. (B. Ch. O., par. 47.)

175. Quorum of the board. "The board of each church shall determine the number necessary for a quorum." (B. Ch. O., par. 47.) The number necessary for a quorum of the Session is a good guide. (See par. 256.) (B. Ch. O., par. 61.)

176. Duties of the deacons. The original deacons were appointed to relieve the apostles, especially in relieving the poor. Our Book of Church Order, paragraph 45, commits all the temporal affairs of the church to the deacons. If the deacons would take the initiative in all temporal matters, it would greatly relieve ministers of a load and they could give themselves more wholly to the ministry of the Word and to prayer. The deacons should take the initiative in preparing budgets and plans for raising it.

Before they undertake to execute their plans they should submit their budget and plans to the Session for their suggestions and approval. The deacons should recognize the fact that the Session is the governing body of the church. If the Session would give raising of budgets and all other temporal affairs over to the deacons, it would give the Session more time to devote to the spiritual affairs of the church as outlined in paragraph 43 of the Book of Church Order.

177. Relation of pastor to deacons. The pastor is an advisory member. He cannot preside. Neither can he vote in the meeting of the deacons. (B. Ch. O., par. 47.)

178. Duties as trustees. The following statement by Rev. Edward Mack, D. D., is well worth reading:

"For holding, receiving or transferring church property, it is ordinarily required by the laws of the various states and necessitated by the very nature of such things, that a body of trustees, appointed by the congregation and recorded in the civil courts, shall hold the church property, and represent the church in all civil transactions. Otherwise, any individual member might be amenable in law for any cause involving the Church. It has been customary in our churches to appoint such trustees without regard to their relation to the churches as officers or members. It has often happened that non-members, only attendants on the church services, have for reasons of convenience or policy been appointed as trustees. It always seemed anomalous that a non-confessor should be made custodian of the affairs of the believer. Under the new law the anomaly disappears. The deacon logically and properly becomes the trustee of the property, for which, in other ways also, he is held responsible.

"These trustees must be organized as a board with the necessary officers, a board distinct, however, from the board of deacons, and under the same restrictions and with the same accountability as any ordinary board of trustees must have before the law."

When it happens that there are no deacons in a church, the trustees are then to be chosen from the Session, or from communicants of the church. There is nothing in the Book of Church Order giving direction as to who shall be made trustees of a church. Paragraph 157, Book of Church Order, authorizes a particular church to incorporate. This calls for the appointment of trustees.

Under Chapter XIII on "Trustees and Church Property," there is a deliverance of the General Assembly in 1890 Minutes, p. 29, in which it is stated that "in the appointment of trustees, a part or all of the deacons should be selected." As far as possible, this should be the policy of the church.

179. **Keeping minutes.** It is just as important for the deacons to keep a record of their proceedings as for the Session. For this purpose a record book similar to that used by the Session should be secured in which the secretary of the board shall record the proceedings of its meetings. The treasurer should make a report to the board, and when approved this report should be spread upon the minutes. Paragraph 47, Book of Church Order, requires further that these minutes of the board be submitted to the Session once every six months.

180. **Funds should not be diverted.** Church funds should not be used for any other purpose than that for which they have been contributed. Funds contributed for benevolent objects should not be diverted to the payment of current expenses, etc.

181. **Remittance of funds.** The treasurer of benevolent funds should make monthly remittance of all funds in his hands. The church should use the weekly envelope system, and the treasurer should see that payments are made promptly. If the treasurers of benevolent funds could realize the great importance of prompt collections and remittances, they would make the financial condition of the beneficiaries much better.

182. **Funds to be reported by treasurer.** The Assembly further directs that only such funds as pass through the hands of the regular treasurer should be reported by the church. Individual members who desire to send funds should make a report of the amount, and place the funds in the hands of the treasurer of benevolences so that a correct record may be kept. Under the heading "Miscellaneous Contributions," only such funds as pass through the hands of the regular treasurer should be reported.

183. **A benevolent treasurer.** The General Assembly strongly urges the appointment in every church of a treasurer of benevolences, who shall receive and forward promptly all benevolent and special funds. Where such a treasurer is appointed, funds collected by the Sabbath school and all church organizations for benevolences should be turned over to this special benevolent treasurer of the church to be forwarded by him to the beneficiaries. (Cf. par. 307.)

This plan will insure the keeping of benevolent funds and current expense funds entirely separate, the prompt forwarding of benevolent funds, and the securing of accurate reports at the end of the church year.

184. **Joint meetings with the Session.** These meetings should be for conference only. The deacons cannot vote in the Session; neither can the Session vote in the meeting of the board of deacons. They should meet jointly at least quarterly. (B. Ch. O., par. 47.)

185. **Cannot call a congregational meeting.** The deacons may request the Session to call a congregational meeting, but it rests with the Session as to whether the congregational meeting shall be called or not. (A. D. 1922, p. 78; M. G. A. 1890, p. 46; B. Ch. O., par. 153.)

186. Cannot fix salary of pastor. The board of deacons has no authority to change the contract as to pastor's salary without consent of the congregation. (A. D. 1922, p. 78; M. G. A. 1914, p. 25.) (Cf. par. 315 [5, 6].)

187. Eligible to appointment on committees in higher courts. "Deacons may properly be appointed by the higher courts to serve on committees, especially as treasurers. It is suitable also that they be appointed trustees of any fund held by any of the church courts. It may also be helpful for the church courts, when devising plans of church finance, to invite wise and consecrated deacons to their counsels." (B. Ch. O., par. 48.)

188. Examined by Session. One of the duties of the Session is "to examine, ordain and install ruling elders and deacons, on their election by the church." (B. Ch. O., par. 65; see also par. 148 for questions to be asked on ordination.)

189. Advisory conferences. "The deacons may, with much advantage, hold conferences from time to time for the discussion of the interests committed to them. Such conferences may include representatives of churches covering areas of smaller or larger extent. Any actions taken by these conferences shall have only an advisory character." (B. Ch. O., par. 49.)

190. Releasing of deacons from active duties. "A deacon or ruling elder may have reasons which he deems valid for being released from the active duties of his office. In such a case the Session, after conference with him and careful consideration of the matter, may, if it thinks proper, accept his resignation, and dissolve the official relation which exists between him and the Church." (B. Ch. O., par. 149.)

191. Deacons sometimes unacceptable to the church. "A ruling elder or deacon, though chargeable with neither heresy nor immorality, may become unacceptable in his official capacity to a majority of the church which he serves. In such a case, the church may take the initiative by a majority vote at a regularly called congregational meeting and request the Session to dissolve the official relationship between the church and the officer without censure. The Session, after conference with the ruling elder, or deacon, and after careful consideration, may use its discretion as to dissolving the official relationship. In either case, the Session shall report its action to the congregation." (B. Ch. O., par. 149.)

192. Inability of deacons to sell church property without a formal vote of the congregation. The deacons have the care and custody, "but not the title to church property, real and personal, but in matters of special importance, affecting the property of the church, they cannot take final action without the consent of the congregation." (B. Ch. O., par. 45.) In minor matters incident to the care of the property, such as disposing of articles of personal property no longer needed or to be disposed of for purposes of replacement, the board of deacons may sell without a vote of the congregation. The title to church real estate is vested either in trustees, or in a corporation, and the deacons have no power to authorize or require its sale without a favorable vote of the congregation. (M. G. A. 1927, p. 50.)

193. Care of church property. "They shall have the care of the property of the congregation, both real and personal, and shall keep in proper repair the church edifice and other buildings belonging to the congregation. In matters of special importance affecting the property of the church, they cannot take final action without the consent of the congregation. In the discharge of their duties the deacons are under the supervision and authority of the Session. In a church in which it is impossible for any reason to secure deacons, the duties of the office shall devolve upon the ruling elders." (B. Ch. O., par. 45.)

194. Appointment of deaconess by Session. "It is often expedient that the Session of a church should select and appoint godly women of the congregation to assist the deacons in ministering to the sick, to widows, to orphans, to prisoners, and to others who may be in any distress or need. They may also aid the deacons in collecting and distributing the offerings of the people." (B. Ch. O., par. 50.)

195. Deliverance on the deaconess. "We recommend that the Assembly call the attention of our churches to paragraph 50, Book of Church Order, authorizing Sessions to select and appoint godly women for diaconal ministry in the congregations to which they belong, and encourage a more generous use of suitable women for such service." (M. G. A. 1926, p. 53.)

CHAPTER XIII

TRUSTEES AND CHURCH PROPERTY

196. General statement. The visible church is spiritual, and as such has no physical existence; but it is composed of men and women who have a physical existence. It is, therefore, necessary for the physical body to have a place to meet and also the physical means for carrying on of the church's life and activity. Property must be purchased and church buildings must be erected. There must be some one who is authorized to receive, hold property, buy, sell or dispose of property already acquired under the direction of the congregation. This chapter deals with the rights of the church under the law as defined by the General Assembly.

197. Deeds. All deeds must be made in compliance with the laws of the several States.

JURISDICTION OF CONGREGATIONS, OFFICERS, AND TRUSTEES OVER CHURCH PROPERTY AND OTHER SECULAR INTERESTS

198. Right to appoint trustees. "There is vested in each congregation organized as a church, or in a number of persons about to be organized as such, the right and power to appoint and remove at will trustees and their successors, who may receive donations, and purchase, take and hold property, real and personal, in trust for the congregation; and if authorized by a majority of the church members at a congregational meeting constitutionally convened for that purpose, sell, mortgage, trust-deed, or exchange the property so held to aid in the construction or repairing of their church edifices, or for other purposes. Care should, however, be had to make the action conform to the law of the State wherein the property is located.

"In the appointment of trustees, a part or all of the deacons, if suitable, should be selected; and wherever property is now held by unincorporated churches, it is advisable to have deeds made to the trustees in all cases where it can be done." (A. D. 1922, p. 77; M. G. A. 1890, p. 28.)

199. Incorporation of churches. The General Assembly in 1923 adopted six recommendations concerning the incorporation of churches and church courts. (M. G. A. 1923, p. 133.) These recommendations are as follows:

"1. The committee recommends that the members of each church located in a State, the laws of which permit the incorporation of religious bodies, be incorporated as a separate corporate body; and that the title to all real and personal property of such church be vested in the corporation, subject to control as prescribed by the charter and by-laws of the corporation and the laws of the church.

"2. The committee recommends that each Presbytery located in a State the laws of which permit the incorporation of religious bodies be incorporated; and that all property, real and personal, of a Presbytery be vested in a Presbyterian Corporation.

"3. The committee finds that it would be a task well-nigh impossible for the committee to prepare a standard set of by-laws for use in all the States over which the General Assembly exercises jurisdiction. Some States require certain provisions of the corporate law to be placed in the charter, while in other States these same provisions may be prescribed by by-laws. Two States, Virginia and West Virginia, do not permit incorporation of religious societies, but regulate by statute the ownership and control of property of religious bodies. Again, the courts have frequently construed the statutes regulating the incorporation of religious bodies, and these decisions should be considered in the application for charters and the preparation of by-laws.

"However, the committee suggests that certain principles for the purpose of uniformity and protection should be recognized and declared in the organic law of each congregational corporation, either by their insertion in the charter or in the by-laws of the corporation as the laws of each State may require or permit. Of these principles, the following should be mentioned:

"(a) The name of the corporation should be the same as the name by which the church is popularly known; and the place of its corporate existence should be stated simply as the town or city where the church is located.

"(b) The objects or purposes of the corporation should be declared to establish and maintain a church organization, Presbyterian in its doctrines, tenets and form of church government, as such doctrines, tenets and form of government are prescribed or may hereafter be prescribed by that association and body of Christians designated as the Presbyterian Church in the United States, and connected with and subject to the jurisdiction of said Presbyterian Church in the United States in matters of faith and form of government.

"(c) The members of the corporation should be the subscribers to the application for the charter and all other communing members in good and regular standing in the existing unincorporated body or association of professing Christians comprising the church to be incorporated, and such other persons as may thereafter from time to time become communing members of said unincorporated body. *Provided, however*, that whenever a member of the unincorporated body or church shall cease to be a member thereof, such person shall cease to be a member of the corporation. That the manner, form and requisites of application and admission into the said unincorporated body or church should conform to the rules of government and discipline that are now or may hereafter be prescribed by the said Presbyterian Church in the United States. That the affairs of the corporation shall be managed by a board of trustees (say not less than five or more than seven), each of whom shall be a member of the corporation. The trustees shall be elected for.............. years (the term of office is usually regulated by statute, but a term not exceeding two years is suggested, if legal). That these trustees, from among themselves, shall elect a chairman, vice-chairman, secretary and treasurer. That the trustees shall be the fiscal agents of the corporation; shall control the title to and disposition of all real estate and all endowment funds of the corporation; shall keep, preserve and protect all title deeds and other documents relating to the property of the church, and have such other powers as may be conferred by the charter and by-laws. That all conveyances and mortgages shall be made by the trustees in the name of the corporation; provided, no mortgage or conveyances shall be executed and delivered except after the adoption by the members of the corporation of a resolution authorizing the execution of the conveyance or mortgage at a meeting of the members of the corporation duly called for the purpose after notice has been given for at least one week and at not less than two regular congregational meetings held on different days, and prior to the day of the meetings so called.

"(d) The charter should provide that the members of the corporation may adopt by-laws, and that these by-laws, if the charter does not do so, should prescribe the time and manner of the election of and the terms of the officers of the corporation, the number of meetings of the corporation and of the trustees to be held annually, the manner of preserving the records of the corporation, and that the minutes of all meetings of the corporation and of the trustees shall be carefully kept recorded in a book used only for such purpose.

"4. The committee suggests that should it be deemed advisable by the Assembly that forms of charter and by-laws be recommended to the churches for use in the respective States; that such forms be prepared for use in each State by a committee of lawyers residing in the State appointed by the Synod for the State; and that such forms be recommended after approval by the Synod appointing the committee.

"5. The committee would emphasize the principle that whenever the members of a church are organized into a corporation there are two distinct bodies to be considered: (1) the religious body of Christians professing the Presbyterian faith, and (2) the civil body recognizing the laws of the State organized for temporal purposes. Although the membership of the two bodies is identical, the distinction between the two bodies always exists.

"6. The committee recommends that all conveyances, transfers, bequests, devises and donations of property to a church corporation, whether congregational or presbyterial, should wherever possible be made without reservations, restrictions, limitations or other devices to tie the hands of the members of the corporation and restrain the full control and use by the corporation of the property. The present generation should not assume that those who follow will be less careful, less zealous or faithful to God and the progress of His Kingdom." (M. G. A. 1923, pp. 133-135.)

200. Valid deed. The importance of having a valid deed for church property cannot be stressed too much. For much of the property now held by churches there is no valid deed.

201. Title to property of dissolved church. "When a local church, either with or without its consent, is dissolved by a Presbytery having jurisdiction over such a church without making disposition of the property of such dissolved church, all such property shall, upon such dissolution, vest in and become the property of such Presbytery, and such Presbytery shall have full power to sell, convey and dispose of such property and the proceeds thereof, and to authorize the conveyance thereof to be executed in the name of the Presbytery by such person or persons as it may direct, care being taken, however, that in all such cases conformity be had to the laws applicable, if any, of the States wherein such property may be located, and care also being had that the conditions, if any, of the instruments of conveyance be observed." (A. D. 1922, p. 90; M. G. A. 1917, p. 68.)

202. Incorporation of churches. "When a particular church is incorporated, its meetings for the transaction of the business of the corporation will be provided for in its charter and by-laws, which must always be in accord with the Standards of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, and must not infringe upon the powers or duties of the Session or of the board of trustees." (B. Ch. O., par. 157.)

203. Additional law on title to property of a dissolved church. "If a church shall be dissolved by the Presbytery, or otherwise cease to exist, and no disposition has been made of its property, those who hold the title to the property shall deliver, convey and transfer to the Presbytery of which the church was a member, or to the authorized agents of the Presbytery, all property of the church; and the receipt and acquittance of the Presbytery, or its proper representatives, shall be a full and complete discharge of all liabilities of such persons holding the property of the church. The Presbytery receiving such property shall apply the same or the proceeds thereof at its discretion." (B. Ch. O., par. 158.)

204. Universalists not to use church buildings. It is not lawful for our church Sessions to grant the use of the church building to Universalists for holding religious services. (A. D. 1922, p. 935; M. G. A. 1891, p. 230.)

205. Purchasing or selling church property. It is important that every step necessary to the purchase or sale of church property be well understood.

Every congregation organized as a church has the right to own property for the use of the church.

The first step in the purchase or sale of church property is either to have a committee appointed by the congregation called by the Session for this purpose, to decide upon a certain recommendation to the congregation, or for the Session and deacons to have a conference and make certain recommendations to the congregation.

If after a decision has been made either by the committee or the elders and deacons, then the Session should call the congregational meeting to act upon the report. A week or ten days' time should be given publicly either from the pulpit or through a paper published in or near the place, so that all the members may know the time and the object of the meeting. Frequently a notice is sent to every member through the mail.

The congregation, called by the Session to meet, after considering the report of the committee or officers, may decide to purchase or sell the church property, either a lot for the church or manse, or any other action the congregation may decide to take on the matter under consideration.

206. Organization of a congregational meeting. When the time arrives for the congregation to meet, the pastor, if there be one, usually presides. If this is not convenient, the congregation should elect one of its members, usually an elder or deacon, to preside, or it may ask a minister of the Presbytery to be present and preside. A secretary should also be elected. He is usually the clerk of the Session.

If, after a free discussion, the matter is put to a vote of the congregation, a majority of the members present is necessary to decide the question. Only members present can vote. No absent member can vote by proxy.

When the majority votes to purchase or sell and purchase other property, the trustees must be given definite instructions as to the price to be paid or the price to receive in order to make the sale or purchase.

If there are no funds on hand to pay for the purchase, the deacons may be instructed to raise the money from the members and place it in the hands of the trustees, or the trustees may be instructed to borrow money or make the purchase in any form the congregation may decide upon. This is true also in the sale of church property. The congregation may give the trustees instructions as to the terms of the sale. Neither the deacons nor the trustees have the right to borrow money or place a mortgage on the church property except by a vote of the congregation.

In making a deed, the steps taken are important. The trustees should sign the deed by authority of the congregation. The deed must conform to the laws of the State in which the property is located.

The deed to church property should be made to the Presbyterian church of............................ (Here give the name of the church and the place or town or city where it is located.)

207. Property held by church courts. Property held by trustees of a Presbytery or Synod must be purchased or sold in the same manner. The church court, either Presbytery or Synod, must act and give directions to the trustees what to do and how to reinvest the funds derived from the sale of any property held by the church court.

CHAPTER XIV

BEQUESTS, ANNUITIES, ETC.

208. General statement. God has made us responsible for the right use of money which He has placed in our hands. Many members of the Presbyterian Church recognize their stewardship in God's Kingdom. Those whom God has thus so richly blessed are seeking a way in which they can discharge their duties as stewards. The General Assembly has provided ways and means which become the channels through which the obligations of stewardship may be discharged:

1. The established budget of the church.
2. Forms of bequest by means of which sums, large or small, may be given to the various causes of the church.
3. *Annuity bonds*. These are for those who need the income from funds during their lifetime, but desire the principal to go to some object of benevolence at their death.
4. The establishment of foundations with large sums of money to be used for one or more objects of benevolence, making the trustees of the General Assembly and the Presbyterian Foundation the trustee for any sum left to them by will.

209. Forms of bequest. "I give, devise and bequeath to the trustees of the General Assembly and Presbyterian Foundation of the Presbyterian Church in the United States.................................(here insert the estate devised and bequeathed) for the use and benefit of said Church."

"I give and bequeath to the trustees of the Presbyterian Committee of Religious Education and Publication of the Presbyterian Church in the United States (incorporated under the laws of the State of Virginia) (here name the amount of the bequest), to be used for the publication work of said Church."

"I give and bequeath to the Executive Committee of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the United States (incorporated under the laws of the State of Tennessee) (here name the amount of the bequest), to be used for the foreign mission work of said Church."

"I devise and bequeath to the Executive Committee of Christian Education and Ministerial Relief of the Presbyterian Church in the United States the sum of ....dollars for the cause of ministerial relief."

"I devise and bequeath to the Executive Committee of Christian Education and Ministerial Relief of the Presbyterian Church in the United States the sum of $................ to aid candidates of said Church in preparation for the Gospel ministry."

"I hereby give and bequeath to the Executive Committee of Home Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the United States (incorporated under the laws of the State of Georgia) (here name the bequest), to be used for the home mission work of said Church."

210. Life annuity bonds. It goes without saying that the most desirable form of gift to any religious or charitable cause is the gift without conditions. The life annuity bond is for that class of people who cannot spare both the capital amount of the gift and the income it will yield. In other words, they need the income. The life annuity bond is insurance turned around. In insurance one pays a number of small annual amounts, and the insurance company pays one large amount to the estate at death. In the life annuity bond one pays a definite capital sum all at once and is guaranteed a semi-annual income at a fixed rate for life.

Life annuity bonds are not an experiment. They have been written since the days of the Roman Empire. The principle on which they are written is sound. Three of the executive committees of our church have written them for years, namely: the Executive Committee of Foreign Missions, the Executive Committee of Home Missions, the Executive Committee of Christian Education and Ministerial Relief.

The principal is invested, and out of the proceeds the annuities are paid in semi-annual installments. The principal is never liquidated, but at the death of the annuitant becomes a part of a trust fund, and the income thereafter is used for the benevolent work of the Church.

Unlike other investments, the holder of an annuity bond does not have to shift investment every few years. The rate of income for him is fixed for life.

The income is, as a rule, higher than ordinary investment rates of equal security.

Life annuity bonds are free from any and all kinds of taxes.

Even should the original contract be lost, this will not invalidate the agreement of the Presbyterian Foundation to pay the annuities. Other investments may be lost in many ways, but the life annuity bond is as safe from loss as any human plan is safe.

All burden involved in the care of property in old age is completely removed.

There are no executors' commissions; no court or counsel fees; no legal contests.

Life annuity bonds may be written on two lives, as, for example, to cover the life of either husband or wife; or may be written to protect a child for a specified period.

After the death of the annuitant, the principal sum remaining is passed to an endowment fund and the income used to help the benevolent work of the Church. For example, suppose a hundred annuitants who bought bonds of $1,000 each, have passed on to their reward. The principal sum available for producing income for church work will be approximately $100,000. The income on this will be about $6,000, and this amount will send out several new missionaries each year, or take care of a number of aged ministers, or otherwise be used where it will do the most good. Can one find a better investment?

211. Specimen application for bond.

To the Executive Committee of..
of the Presbyterian Church in the United States:

I, ..., of...,
in the county of.........................and State of..........................
(applicant), being desirous of aiding said Executive Committee in its work of......................., and desiring at the same time to purchase from said Executive Committee an annuity of..........................Dollars ($..............), to be paid to..(annuitant), in semi-annual installments, do hereby declare that ....he was born at.......................on the.................day of..................., in the year one thousand...........hundred and............., and agree to make a gift of...Dollars ($..................), when the annuity contract issued by you upon this application, shall have been approved.

Annuitant's father's name was......................................., and h...... mother's maiden name was...............................

In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my seal, this...............day of.............................
A. D. one thousand nine hundred and.................

(Signature of Applicant)

....(Seal)

(Signature of annuitant if other than the applicant):

....(Seal)

WITNESS:

....

....

(This application to be signed in duplicate)

212. Specimen annuity bond.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
Incorporated under the laws of the
Commonwealth of..............................

THE
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
OF..
OF THE
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES

No................ $..................

ANNUITY BOND
Department of..............................

Whereas................................, of.................................... has this day made a payment of the principal sum of ....dollars ($................) to "The Executive Committee of.................................... of the Presbyterian Church in the United States," a corporation organized and existing under and by virtue of the laws of the State of......................and located at......................in said State, the receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, the said "The Executive Committee of..............................of the Presbyterian Church in the United States," hereby promises and agrees to pay unto.............................. of.............................. in the county of.................... and State of.............................. an annunity at the rate of................per centum upon said principal sum, payable in equal semi-annual installments at such place as said annuitant shall direct. The said principal sum of......................................dollars ($................) so paid to "The Executive Committee of ....of the Presbyterian Church in the United States," with such amounts of said annuity remaining in its hands unpaid to said annuitant at the time of h............ decease, shall become the property of "The Executive Committee of.........................of the Presbyterian Church in the United States."

It is understood and agreed that said principal sum shall be and remain part of the..........................fund of said "The Executive Committee of.............................. of the Presbyterian Church in the United States," the net income from which shall be used.............................. of the Presbyterian Church in the United States.

In witness whereof, the said "The Executive Committee of..........................of the Presbyterian Church in the United States" has caused its corporation seal, duly attested, to be hereto affixed, this....................day of.........................., A. D. 19.........

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF..................
OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
IN THE UNITED STATES.

By..

President.

Attest:

....

Secretary.

213. The Presbyterian Foundation.

1. *Its history.* In the first years of existence of our Church (Presbyterian Church in the United States) about 1866, the Assembly erected a board of trustees to act as a holding corporation for the Assembly. This board has during its history received and faithfully administered a number of trust funds left by bequest. Only a comparatively small number of our people have ever known that our Church had such a board. About 1918 a small group of men, taking notice of the growing number of "community foundations" all over the country, conceived the idea of establishing for our Church a foundation, and to keep its purposes and plans before our people constantly. The Assembly of 1924 approved the plan, and it was reaffirmed by the Assembly of 1925, by changing the present charter of the trustees, and adding to the board one member from each Synod, together with directions for a more aggressive policy.

2. *Organization.* Instead of creating new machinery for this purpose, the Assembly very wisely decided to make use of the perpetual charter given by the State of North Carolina to the original trustees.

3. *Legal name of the organization.* "The Trustees of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States and the Presbyterian Foundation, Incorporated." In making a bequest, this full name should be carefully written.

4. *Purpose.* To do for our whole Church what the community foundation, for example, does for a city. That is, to keep before our people the need for remembering the causes of the Church in their wills; to accept any reasonable trust and execute it according to the terms of the donor; to write annuity bonds where a sum is intended for ultimate division among several causes; to refer any prospective annuitant,

predisposed to one cause only, to the executive committee in whose work he is especially interested, for writing the annuity contract; to encourage our people through approved insurance agents, to take out insurance for the causes of the Church; to protect the smaller institutions of the Church, such as mission schools and orphanages, by making the Presbyterian Foundation the trustee for any sum left to them by will. In short, we are living in a time when people are making wills more than ever for religious and benevolent work, and the Presbyterian Foundation exists not only to accept their bequests, but to keep the need for such ever before them. It will act as the trustee for any approved cause anywhere at any time. The trustees serve without salary.

5. *Plans.* First, to keep the ministry of the Church informed and ask their co-operation in announcing to their people occasionally the work and function of the Presbyterian Foundation. Second, to keep in touch with all Presbyterian attorneys throughout the Church that they may know of this Foundation when their clients of our Church come to them for advice on wills. Third, to select carefully a few insurance men to present the insurance feature to Presbyterian laymen of more than ordinary income. Fourth, to secure the appointment by each Synod of an advisory committee of two men from each Presbytery to act with the representative from that Synod in an advisory capacity in bringing the purposes and plans of the Foundation closer to the people. Fifth, to co-operate with our established agencies, rather than overlap their work.

6. *Field.* Undoubtedly, any one who gives a moment's thought to this is impressed with the large opportunities in this undeveloped field. All about us are those who would be glad to pass on to the great

work of the Church some or all of their capital after they can no longer use it as stewards of God. One of our institutions recently lost a large bequest because the man was out in California when he died and could not remember the name of the institution in making his will. We must make the Presbyterian Foundation a household word in our Church. Within a few years we shall see the rewards.

7. *Co-operation needed.* Without the co-operation of our ministry and officers the Foundation will not function as it should. A word here and there, a friendly suggestion, a notice in church bulletins occasionally, a sympathetic attitude will be as bread cast on the waters.

The Presbyterian Foundation will write annuity bonds at the same rates as obtain with the three executive committees of our Church, where the principal is intended for joint use among several causes. Where one wishes his or her principal sum to be used exclusively for one cause, as, for example, foreign missions, the bond will be written by that executive committee, and correspondence with the officers of the Presbyterian Foundation will, in cases of this kind, be referred to the proper executive committee. All correspondence will be treated as confidential. Annuity rates will be given on request.

214. Official headquarters of Presbyterian Foundation.

Commercial National Bank, Charlotte, N. C.
R. A. Dunn, President of Board
George M. Rose, Secretary

LEGAL TITLE OF PRESBYTERIAN FOUNDATION

"The Trustees of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States and the Presbyterian Foundation, Incorporated."

THE FOUR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES

The Executive Committee of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church, U. S., Nashville, Tennessee, Box 330.

The Executive Committee of Home Missions of the Presbyterian Church, U. S., 101 Marietta Street, Atlanta, Georgia.

The Executive Committee of Christian Education and Ministerial Relief of the Presbyterian Church, U. S., 410 Urban Building, Louisville, Kentucky.

The Executive Committee of Religious Education and Publication of the Presbyterian Church, U. S., 6-8 North Sixth Street, Richmond, Virginia.

The General Assembly's Training School for Lay Workers, Incorporated, Richmond, Virginia.

The American Bible Society, New York, New York.

CHAPTER XV

CHURCH COURTS

215. General statement. "The Church is governed by various courts, in regular gradation, which are all, nevertheless, Presbyteries, as being composed exclusively of Presbyters." (B. Ch. O., par. 51.)

These presbyters are of two classes, the teaching elder (or minister) and the ruling elder.

216. Jurisdiction of Church courts. "Ecclesiastical jurisdiction is not a several, but a joint power, to be exercised by presbyters in courts. These courts may have jurisdiction over one or many churches, but they sustain such mutual relations as to realize the idea of the unity of the Church." (B. Ch. O., par. 5.)

217. The Presbytery a Scriptural court. The Presbyterian Church believes that the Presbytery is a court recognized in the Scriptures, and that it "is necessary to the perfection of the order of the visible church." It does not, however, believe it "is essential to its existence." (B. Ch. O., par. 7.)

218. Difference between Church and civil courts. "These assemblies are altogether distinct from the civil magistracy, nor have they any jurisdiction in political or civil affairs." (B. Ch. O., par. 57.)

219. Power of Church courts. "They have no power to inflict temporal pains and penalties, but their authority is in all respects moral or spiritual." (B. Ch. O., par. 57.)

220. Ministerial and declarative. "The jurisdiction of Church courts is only ministerial and declarative, and relates—

"1. To the doctrines and precepts of Christ;

"2. To the order of the Church, and

"3. To the exercise of discipline."

(B. Ch. O., par. 58.)

221. Law-making power.

1. "They can make no laws binding the conscience."

2. They "frame symbols of faith."

3. They may "bear testimony against error in doctrine and immorality in practice, within or without the pale of the Church, and decide cases of conscience."

4. "They have power to establish rules for the government, discipline, worship and extension of the Church."

5. These laws "must be agreeable to the doctrines relating thereto contained in the Scriptures."

6. "The circumstantial details" of the application of these laws are "left to the Christian prudence and wisdom of church officers and courts."

7. "They possess the right" to require obedience "to the laws of Christ."

8. They have the power to "admit those qualified to sealing ordinances, and to their respective offices."

9. They have the power to "exclude the disobedient and disorderly from their offices or from sacramental privileges."

10. They have the power "to cut off the contumacious and impenitent from the congregation of believers."

11. "They possess all the administrative authority necessary to give effect to these powers."

(B. Ch. O., par. 58.)

222. All Church courts one in nature. Being "constituted of the same elements, possessed inherently of the same kinds of rights and powers, and differing only as the constitution may provide." (B. Ch. O., par. 59.)

223. Relation of lower to higher courts. "Disputed matters of doctrine and order, arising in the lower courts, should be referred to the higher courts for decision." (B. Ch. O., par. 59.)

224. **Session.** "The Session exercises jurisdiction over a single church." (B. Ch. O., par. 60.)

225. **Presbytery.** The Presbytery exercises jurisdiction "over what is common to the ministers, Sessions, and churches within a prescribed district." (B. Ch. O., par. 60.)

226. **Synod.** The Synod exercises jurisdiction "over what belongs in common to three or more Presbyteries, and their ministers, Sessions and churches." (B. Ch. O., par. 60.)

227. **General Assembly.** The General Assembly exercises jurisdiction "over such matters as concern the whole Church." (B. Ch. O., par. 60.)

228. **Limitations of jurisdiction.** The limitations of the jurisdiction of these four courts are expressed in the provisions of the constitution. (B. Ch. O., par. 60.)

229. **Matters in common.** "Every court has the right to resolve questions of doctrine and discipline seriously and reasonably proposed, and in general to maintain truth and righteousness, condemning erroneous opinions and practices which tend to the injury of the peace, purity or progress of the Church." (B. Ch. O., par. 60.)

230. **Subject to review.** "The lower courts are subject to the review and control of the higher courts, in regular gradation." (B. Ch. O., par. 60.)

231. **Mutual relation between courts.** The courts of the Church "are not separate and independent tribunals; but they have a mutual relation, and every act of jurisdiction is the act of the whole Church performed by it through the appropriate organ." (B. Ch. O., par. 60.)

232. **The official records of a court.** "The minutes of a Church court become its official record as soon as they are approved by that court and the signature of

its stated clerk is evidence that they have been thus approved." (A. D. 1922, p. 168; M. G. A. 1890, p. 46.)

233. Later deliverance on official records of a court. "The official minutes of a court are the original minutes prepared by the temporary clerk or the assistant to the stated clerk, adopted by the court and signed by the stated clerk. If the stated clerk, before signing the original minutes, discovers that the copy of these original minutes prepared by the temporary or assistant clerk in typewritten or written form for use of the stated clerk in printing the minutes is incorrect by reason of any clerical oversight or typographical error, he shall be authorized to make such corrections as shall make the typewritten or written copy correspond in all respects with the original minutes or notes from which such typewritten or written form was prepared. Further, if it be discovered that in the printed copy of the minutes there are certain typographical errors which make the printed minutes of the court vary from the original minutes adopted by the court and signed by the stated clerk, the stated clerk shall give official notice through the press or through the court concerned of the typographical errors, which notice shall be sufficient authority for those possessing copies of the printed minutes to make the printed copy correspond with the original minutes." (M. G. A. 1925, p. 92.)

234. Method of correcting errors in official records. "Any errors subsequently discovered by the court in its approved records may be corrected in its subsequent meeting, the correction appearing only in the minutes of that meeting." (A. D. 1922, p. 168; M. G. A. 1890, p. 46.)

235. Right of private judgment. Courts cannot make laws binding the conscience. "Church courts are not infallible, but on the contrary 'all may err, and many have erred; therefore, they are not to be made the rule of faith and practice, but to be used as a help in both.' (C. of F., Ch. XXXI, Sec. III.) Thus the right of private judgment is asserted; this right, however, is not opposed to lawful authority, but to the assumption of power to bind the conscience." (A. D. 1897, p. 92; M. G. A. 1881, p. 383.)

236. Method of operation of Church courts. Stated meetings. Church courts meet at stated times, in accordance with the rules governing them and in accordance with adjournment. After organization, the moderator appoints a number of standing committees, to whom the business coming before the court is referred. These committees consider the business entrusted to them and make report to the court before adjournment. The court also appoints executive and permanent committees, who usually serve for one year and transact the business entrusted to them under the rules and regulations adopted by the court. Church courts also appoint ecclesiastical commissions, consisting of not less than a quorum of the court appointing. For explanation of the duties of the various kinds of committees and commissions, see the pages following. (B. Ch. O., pars. 93, 94.)

I. COMMITTEES

Committees in church courts are named in accordance with the kind and character of business entrusted to them.

1

237. Executive committee. The term "executive" means that the committee has been clothed with authority to execute and bring to a conclusion the business entrusted to it. They are small deliberative bodies, but subordinate to the body that appoints them. The appointing body defines the number, the duties they are to perform, and the authority they are to exercise, without defining the method or order by which these duties are to be performed. All the authority of the body appointing them, with certain limitations, is given them. The rules of procedure, together with the by-laws, are submitted to the appointing body and adopted. Executive committees are usually appointed by bodies which meet only once or twice a year. They conduct the business of the appointing body, which has been entrusted to them, as though the appointing body was in session. A full report must be made to the appointing body for approval at the stated or annual meeting.

2

238. **Permanent committees.** Permanent committees have not as much authority and power as executive committees. The appointing body entrusts to permanent committees the performance of certain well-defined duties. These duties require the time between the stated meetings of the appointing body for the performance of them. A full outline of the work, together with the method of operation, has been adopted by the appointing body before it is placed in the hands of the permanent committee. A full report should be made to the appointing body.

3

239. **Standing committees.** Standing committees are appointed by the court while in session to whom the business coming before the court is referred. They must consider it and make a report on it, with recommendations (if necessary) before the court adjourns. Standing committees are dissolved with the final adjournment of the court appointing them.

4

240. Select or special committees. Select committees are appointed to consider certain business for which no provision has been made in the standing committees regularly appointed. They exercise all the functions of standing committees.

5

241. Ad-interim committees. Courts may appoint ad-interim committees to whom may be committed certain definite business, to study, investigate and make recommendations to the next annual or stated meeting of the court.

II. ECCLESIASTICAL COMMISSIONS

242. Definition. "A commission differs from an ordinary committee in this, that while a committee is appointed to examine, consider and report, a commission is authorized to deliberate upon and conclude the business referred to it." (B. Ch. O., par. 92.)

243. Record of proceedings to be kept. "It shall keep a full record of its proceedings, which shall be submitted to the court appointing it, entered on its minutes, and regarded and treated as the action of the court." (B. Ch. O., par. 92.)

244. Membership and quorum.

1. *In Presbytery,* "the commission shall consist of at least three ministers and one ruling elder."

2. "The Presbytery at the time of the appointment of the commission shall determine what the quorum shall be."

3. It shall not be less than three ministers and one ruling elder:

(a) If it is "clothed with judicial powers."
(b) If it has "authority to conduct judicial process."
(c) If it is "to ordain a minister."

In the ordination of a minister, "the Presbytery itself shall conduct the previous examination." (B. Ch. O., par. 93.)

4. *In a Synod.* "The commission shall consist of not less than fifteen, of whom not less than seven shall be ruling elders."

5. *In the General Assembly.* "The commission shall be not less than twenty-seven, of whom not less than thirteen shall be ruling elders."

6. *In the Synod and the General Assembly.* "Two-thirds of the commissioners shall be a quorum to attend to business." (B. Ch. O., par. 94.)

245. Matters which may be submitted. "Among the matters that may be properly executed by commissions are:

1. "The taking of testimony in judicial cases."
2. "The ordination of ministers."
3. "The installation of ministers."
4. "The visitation of portions of the churches affected with disorder."
5. "The organization of new churches."

(B. Ch. O., par. 93.)

246. Cases which may be submitted. "The Presbytery, Synod or General Assembly may, of its own motion, commit any judicial case coming before it by appeal or complaint to a commission, and should ordinarily follow this procedure, especially when requested by one or both parties to the case. Such a commission shall be appointed by the court from its members other than members of the court from which the case comes up." (B. Ch. O., par. 94.)

247. Duties of the commission.

1. "The commission shall try the case in the manner prescribed by the Rules of Discipline."

2. It "shall submit to the court a full statement of the case."

3. It "shall give the judgment rendered."

4. All the proceedings "shall be entered on the minutes of the court" appointing it.

5. The judgment of the commission "shall be entered on the minutes of the court and accepted as its action and judgment in the case." (B. Ch. O., par. 94.)

248. **General powers in the General Assembly.** "The General Assembly shall have power to commit the various interests pertaining to the general work of evangelization to one or more commissions." (B. Ch. O., par. 95.)

249. **Limited powers.** A commission is incompetent to do any work except that which has been committed to it, even though the commission has a full quorum. (A. D. 1922, p. 107; M. G. A. 1897, p. 40.)

250. **Right of appeal.** A pastor cannot appeal from the decision of a commission to Synod before that commission reports its decision back to the court of Presbytery which authorized it. The appeal then must be from the Presbytery to Synod which authorized it. The appeal then must be from the Presbytery to Synod and not from the commission. (A. D. 1922, p. 108; M. G. A. 1909, p. 48.)

251. **Judicial powers given a commisison.** "A Presbytery has the right to give judicial powers to a commission of its creation." (M. G. A. 1924, p. 45; B. Ch. O., par. 94.)

After studying closely fifty judicial cases coming up to the General Assembly, from 1870 to 1909, and having had all judicial cases since then go through my hands as clerk, I do not find a single case in which the Assembly opened for discussion the judgment of a commission to which an appeal or complaint was given. In every case, the judgment of the commission was entered on the minutes as the judgment of the Assembly. In 1889, I was a commissioner to the General Assembly, and saw an effort made by the defense counsel to have the case opened for further discussion after the commission had made its report. The moderator decided against this being done. Rev. G. D. Armstrong, D. D., was chairman of the commission. He had been the chairman of a committee of the Assembly that revised our old Book of Church Order and prepared the articles on Ecclesiastical Commissions. He explained to the Assembly the meaning of these articles, in which he stated very clearly that it was not the intention of the Book of Church Order to indicate that the case would be opened in the court for further consideration after the commission had made its report, but its judgment should be entered upon the records of the court as the judgment of the court itself. In this case, this was done, and the judgment of the commission became the judgment of the Assembly.

252. **Permanent Judicial Committee.** The General Assembly in 1926 appointed a Permanent Judicial Committee and defined its duties as follows:

"1. The General Assembly shall appoint a Permanent Judicial Committee consisting of seven members, two of whom shall serve one year, two for two years, and three for three years. No person shall be eligible for service on this committee for more than two terms in succession. All vacancies shall be filled by the General Assembly for three-year terms, except that in the case of vacancies occurring between sessions of the Assembly, they shall be filled by appointment of the Moderator of the Assembly for the unexpired term. Four of the seven members shall be ruling elders, and the seven shall represent not fewer than three Synods.

"2. The General Assembly shall refer to this committee for consideration and report all judicial cases coming before that body by appeal, complaint or otherwise, in the following manner: within sixty days after the adjournment of the court from which the case is taken to the General Assembly, the Stated Clerk of the Assembly shall place in the hands of the chairman of the said Permanent Judicial Committee the complete records of the case, or a certified copy thereof for the use of the committee.

"3. The Stated Clerk of the General Assembly shall transmit to the chairman of said committee, as soon as received, copies of all overtures to the approaching Assembly touching constitutional questions, for advice. That portion of the committee's report containing these advices shall be placed in the hands of the standing committees on Bills and Overtures, and Judicial Business, along with the overtures.

"4. The committee shall file its report by the second day of the Assembly. This report shall present to the Assembly the law at issue, or affected by all the matters referred to it, together with such references as will aid and expedite a careful review of the whole matter by those charged therewith; and it may add such suggestions as in the judgment of the committee will assist the Assembly or its agents to arrive at just and lawful decisions.

"5. This committee shall meet annually, at the call of the chairman, prior to the meeting of the Assembly, and its necessary expenses shall be provided for by the General Assembly.

"6. This committee may from time to time submit to the General Assembly for its approval such rules of procedure governing the trial and conduct of cases as would appear expedient to the end in view." (M. G. A. 1926, p. 86.)

253. Jurisdiction of Church courts through commissions.

"(1) The jurisdiction of Presbyterian church courts is limited, but only by the Word of God as interpreted in the Standards of the Church. (B. Ch. O., pars. 19, 173.)

"(2) Paragraphs 93-95 (Book of Church Order) merely prescribe the extent to which church courts may exercise their general jurisdiction through the agency of commissions. The use of the word "among," at the beginning of paragraph 93, was intended to extend the operation of the paragraph which was previously limited to the matters enumerated. It now extends to the enumerated matters and also to other matters of a similar nature; that is, to such matters as, in the judgment of the court, do not require participation by all members. The power of a Presbytery to clothe a commission with judicial powers is not an 'assumed' power. It is expressly conferred by paragraph 94.

"(3) Conferring the right to decide is the giving of judicial powers. But when the right given a commission to decide is limited to the decision of matters referred to it by a court having jurisdiction, no original jurisdiction is delegated. A body has original jurisdiction only when its determination of a matter may be invoked, in the first instance. A commission created by a church court has no such jurisdiction. The judicial powers with which it is clothed can be exerted only to determine such matters as are referred to it by the court creating it.

"(4) A commission must, in the first instance, determine its own jurisdiction, but this determination is subject to review by the court creating the commission.

"(5) A commission cannot on its own initiative receive charges and institute judicial process."

(M. G. A. 1927, p. 52.)

CHAPTER XVI

THE SESSION

254. First court. The Session is the first court in the order of gradation and "exercises jurisdiction over a single church." (B. Ch. O., par. 60.)

255. Membership. "The Church Session consists of the pastor or pastors, if there be any, and the ruling elders of a church." (B. Ch. O., par. 61.)

256. Quorum. "If there are three or more ruling elders, the pastor and two ruling elders shall constitute a quorum. If there are less than three ruling elders, the pastor and one ruling elder shall constitute a quorum." (B. Ch. O., par. 61.)

"Any Session, by a majority vote of its members, may fix its own quorum, provided that it is not smaller than the quorum stated in this paragraph." (B. Ch. O., par. 61.)

257. Quorum of a church Session without a pastor. "When a church has no pastor and there are five or more ruling elders, three shall constitute a quorum; if there are less than five ruling elders, two shall constitute a quorum." (B. Ch. O., par. 61.)

258. One ruling elder not a Session. "If there is only one ruling elder he does not constitute a Session, but he should take spiritual oversight of the church, should represent it at Presbytery and Synod, should grant letters of dismission, and should report to the Presbytery any matter needing the action of a church court." (B. Ch. O., par. 61.)

259. Moderator. "The pastor is, by virtue of his office, the moderator of the Session. In his absence, if an emergency should arise requiring immediate action, the Session may elect one of its members to preside.

Should prudential reasons at any time make it advisable for a minister other than the pastor to preside, the pastor may, with the concurrence of the Session, invite a minister of the same Presbytery to perform this service." (B. Ch. O., par. 62.)

260. Moderator of Session without a pastor. "He shall be either

1. A minister appointed for that purpose by Presbytery, or

2. One invited by the Session to preside on a particular occasion, or

3. One of their own members." (B. Ch. O., par. 63.)

4. A minister of another denomination may not moderate a Session. (A. D. 1922, p. 87; M. G. A. 1907, p. 56.)

"In judicial cases, the moderator shall be a minister of the Presbytery to which the church belongs." (B. Ch. O., par. 63.)

261. Moderator of Session from another Presbytery.

"1. It is competent, except in judicial cases, for a minister belonging to one Presbytery to preside at a meeting of a Session in another Presbytery, when invited to do so in accordance with the rules laid down in B. Ch. O., par. 63.

"2. It is the judgment of this Assembly that the minister so invited to preside is moderator by courtesy only, and in no sense a member of the court; that his authority is limited to the preservation of order and the convening and adjourning of the court, and that he should not vote on any question, even in case of a tie." (A. D. 1922, p. 87; M. G. A. 1886, p. 51.)

262. Powers. The duties of the Session, which is charged with maintaining the spiritual government of the church, are defined in the Book of Church Order, paragraph 65. They are as follows:

1. *To inquire into conduct of members.* "The Session has the power to inquire into the knowledge, principles and Christian conduct of the church members under its care."

2. *To discipline members.* The Session has power "to censure members found delinquent."

3. *To encourage parents to present their children for baptism.* The Session has power "to see that parents do not neglect to present their children for baptism."

4. *To receive and dismiss members.* The Session has power "to receive members into the communion of the church" and "to grant letters of dismission to other churches."

5. *Letters of dismission to include children.* When letters of dismission are granted members to other churches, they "shall always include the names of their baptized children." (See par. 287.)

6. *To examine, ordain and install officers.* The Session has power "to examine, ordain and install ruling elders and deacons on their election by the church, and to require these officers to devote themselves to their work."

7. *To examine records of deacons.* The Session has power "to examine the records of the proceedings of the deacons."

8. *To organize Sabbath schools and Bible classes.* The Session has power "to establish and control Sabbath schools and Bible classes with special reference to the children of the church."

9. *To order collections.* The Session has power "to order collections for pious uses."

10. *To oversee music.* The Session has power "to take the oversight of the singing in the public worship of God."

11. *To assemble church for worship.* The Session has power "to assemble the people for worship when there is no minister."

12. *To have oversight of spiritual interests.* The Session has power "to concert the best measures for promoting the spiritual interests of the church and congregation."

13. *To observe injunctions of higher courts.* The Session has power "to observe and carry out the lawful injunctions of the higher courts."

14. *To appoint representatives.* The Session has power "to appoint representatives to the Presbytery and the Synod."

15. *Representatives must make report.* Representatives shall "on their return" from the Presbytery and Synod "make report of their diligence." (B. Ch. O., par. 65.)

263. Stated meetings. "The Session shall hold stated meetings at least quarterly." (B. Ch. O., par. 66.)

264. When pastor may call the Session. "The pastor has power to convene the Session when he may judge it requisite." (B. Ch. O., par. 66.)

265. When pastor must call Session. "He shall always convene it when requested to do so by any two of the ruling elders." (B. Ch. O., par. 66.)

266. When ruling elders may call Session. "When there is no pastor, it may be convened by two ruling elders." (B. Ch. O., par. 66.)

267. Meeting of Session without pastor as moderator not legal. In a church having a pastor, the Session cannot hold a legal meeting without the pastor as moderator, even when an elder of that church acts as moderator without the sanction of the pastor. (M. G. A. 1919, p. 50.)

268. Must convene when ordered by Presbytery. "The Session shall also convene when directed to do so by the Presbytery." (B. Ch. O., par. 66.)

269. Right of pastor to vote in the Session. "The pastor is not merely moderator, but also a member of the Session and has the right to have his vote recorded on all questions." (B. Ch. O., par. 61 and 62; M. G. A. 1927, p. 50.)

270. Inability of pastor to adjourn Session. The Session is a court and must "adjourn on its own ruling." A motion must be made and a majority of the members present must vote for it. (B. Ch. O., par. 53.)

271. Clerk of Session. The clerk of Session is elected by the Session. In selecting an elder for this responsible office, great care should be taken that he should have special qualifications for the office, such as writing a legible hand, having some clerical ability and experience, and having a deep interest in the work of the church. Usually a man who has had experience in some business organization can be secured. His training in the business world should be a help to him in the work of the church. He should be at every meeting of the Session to make full notes of the proceedings and to record them later in the records of the Session. With regard to those present at each meeting, the record should give the names of all present, including the initials. It is important that the record be full and complete. The minutes will be read by future generations. Further information on this subject may be found in the chapter on "Clerks."

272. Record of proceedings. "Every Session shall keep a fair record of its proceedings" and record them in a clear and intelligent manner. (B. Ch. O., par. 67.)

273. Records to be sent to Presbytery. The records should be submitted to Presbytery at least once a year.

The spring meeting of Presbytery is usually designated as the time. (B. Ch. O., par. 67.)

274. **Record of baptisms.** The clerk of Session should have a convenient place either in the Session records or in a roll book for recording baptisms. (See par. 313.)

275. **Record of members.** The clerk of Session should have a place either in the back of the Session records, in small churches, or a roll book for larger churches, in which to keep a record of members received, stating whether on profession of faith or certificate. If baptism is administered to any received on profession of faith, the record should state this fact.

276. **Reception of members only by confession and certificate.** In recording the reception of members, the record should show how they were received. Members are received in two ways: on *profession* and by *certificate.* The word *letter* is not used in the Book of Church Order.

277. **Meaning of word "certificate."** The General Assembly has ruled that when a member is received by restatement, the record should be, "received by certificate." (A. D. 1922, p. 19; M. G. A. 1915, p. 29; 1921, p. 69.)

278. **Record of members received on profession and baptism.** It is often the case that a member received on profession is baptized either at the meeting of the Session or later in the church. Baptism is not a sessional act, but a record of it should be made. While the record of the reception of members is made on the roll of members, this roll is not always accessible. If the mere mention of the fact of baptism, either at the Session meeting or at the regular church service, is made in the records of the Session, this will make

the record clear. The pastor should report to the Session all baptisms.

279. **Receiving members from other denominations.** "The Assembly recommends that in the reception of members from other evangelical denominations, Sessions observe the same form as in the reception of members of our own faith and order." (A. D. 1897, p. 20; M. G. A. 1884, p. 253.)

280. **Rule for granting letters of dismission.** "The usage of the church is to grant a letter of dismission to members in good and regular standing to churches not connected with this Assembly, but such letter cannot be demanded as a matter of legal right." (A. D. 1922, p. 20; M. G. A. 1881, p. 378.)

281. **Displaying national flags.** "The Session having original jurisdiction in all such matters, the Assembly refers all such matters of displaying national flags, etc., to the Session." (A. D. 1922, p. 88; M. G. A. 1920, p. 79.)

282. **Church music.** The church Session is charged "to take the oversight of the singing in the public worship of God." (B. Ch. O., par. 65.) The General Assembly was overtured by the Presbytery of Macon to take into consideration the fact that in many of our churches a practice has arisen of using professional and hired singers for the purpose of giving musical performances as a part of the public worship on the Lord's Day. The Assembly directed the attention of our churches to Book of Church Order, paragraph 65, in which the powers of the Session in taking oversight of the singing in the public worship of God is defined. The Assembly enjoined the Sessions to take oversight of this important part of public worship. (A. D. 1922, p. 848; M. G. A. 1895, p. 390.)

283. **The reception of persons by the Session.** "Children born within the pale of the visible church, and

especially those dedicated to God in baptism, are under the care of the church. They are to be taught to love God and to obey and serve the Lord Jesus Christ. When they come to years of discretion they should be earnestly reminded that they are members of the church by birthright, and that it is their duty and privilege personally to accept Christ, to confess Him before men, and to seek admission to the Lord's Supper.

"The time when young persons come to years of discretion cannot be precisely fixed. This must be left to the prudence of the Session, whose office it is to judge, after careful examination, the qualifications of those who apply for admission to sealing ordinances.

"When unbaptized persons apply for admission into the church, they shall, ordinarily, after giving satisfaction with respect to their knowledge and piety, make a public profession of their faith, in the presence of the congregation, and thereupon be baptized.

"It is recommended, as edifying and proper, that baptized persons, when admitted by the Session to the Lord's Supper, make a public profession of their faith in the presence of the congregation. But in all cases, there should be a clear recognition of their previous relation to the church as baptized members." (B. Ch. O., par. 350-353.)

284. The public receptions of persons. "The time having come for the making of a public profession, and those who have been approved by the Session having taken their places in the presence of the congregation, the minister may state that:

"(1) Of the number of those who were baptized in infancy as members of the Church of God by birthright, and heirs of the covenant promises, and who were then dedicated to God by their parents, or some other responsible person, in solemn vows, the Session has examined and approved A, B and C, who come now to assume for themselves the full privileges and responsibilities of their inheritance in the household of faith.

"(2) If there be present any candidates for baptism, the minister may state that: As applicants for admission into the Church of God by baptism, which is a sign and seal of our engrafting into Christ, and of our engagement to be the Lord's, the Session has examined and approved D, E and F, who are cordially welcomed into the goodly fellowship of the household of faith.

"(3) The minister may then address those making a profession in the following terms: (All of) you being here present to make a public profession of faith, are to assent to the following declarations and promises, by which you enter into a solemn covenant with God and His Church:

"1. Do you acknowledge yourselves to be sinners in the sight of God, justly deserving His displeasure, and without hope save in His sovereign mercy?

"2. Do you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and Saviour of sinners, and do you receive and rest upon Him alone for salvation as He is offered in the Gospel?

"3. Do you now resolve and promise, in humble reliance upon the grace of the Holy Spirit, that you will endeavor to live as becometh the followers of Christ?

"4. Do you promise to support the Church in its worship and work to the best of your ability?

"5. Do you submit yourselves to the government and discipline of the Church, and promise to study its purity and peace?

"The minister may now briefly admonish those making a profession of faith as to the importance of the solemn obligations they have assumed; then baptism may be administered, if there be present any candidates for the ordinance, and the whole concluded with prayer.

"When persons are received from other churches by letters of dismission or by reaffirmation of faith, their names are to be announced to the congregation, with a recommendation of them to its Christian confidence and affection." (B. Ch. O., par. 354-355.)

285. **Dismissing members a sessional act.** "The Assembly regards the granting of certificates of dismission to members, under our constitution, a sessional act." (A. D. 1922, p. 21; M. G. A. 1908, p. 34.) Neither the pastor nor the clerk of Session can issue a certificate of dismission to a member.

286. **Dismissing a member in blank irregular.** "The name of the church to which a member is dismissed should ordinarily be given in the certificate of dismission." (A. D. 1922, p. 21; M. G. A. 1908, p. 34.)

287. **Letter to include baptized children.** Letters issued to members should include their baptized children. (A. D. 1922, p. 22; M. G. A. 1866, p. 13; M. G. A. 1873, p. 312.) (See par. 262 [5].)

288. **The Session "opened," not "constituted" with prayer.** Clerks of Sessions should note this and be careful to use the correct word. (A. D. 1922, p. 88; M. G. A. 1909, p. 49.)

289. **Opening and closing with prayer.** "Meetings of the Session shall ordinarily be opened and closed with prayer." (B. Ch. O., par. 69.)

The Assembly, in interpreting the phrase, "shall ordinarily," says the matter of opening and closing the Session with prayer is left to the conscientious discretion of the Session. (A. D. 1922, p. 88; M. G. A. 1893, p. 17.)

290. "Representative" and "commissioner." The terms used by our Church to define the nature of the elder's relation in the higher courts is "representative" and not "delegate," and for the member of Assembly is "commissioner." The record by the clerk of Session of the election of an elder to attend a higher court (Presbytery or Synod) should be as follows: "Ruling elder..................was elected a representative to Presbytery (or Synod)."

291. Representative not to be instructed. The Session cannot authoritatively instruct its representative how to vote in a higher court. (A. D. 1922, p. 86; M. G. A. 1884, p. 242.)

292. Term of representative in a church court. "When an elder is elected to represent his church in a stated meeting of Presbytery or Synod, his membership continues until the next stated meeting, unless the Session shall appoint some other member of its bench to attend in his place." (A. D. 1922, pp. 68, 102; M. G. A. 1872, p. 164; M. G. A. 1888, p. 424.)

293. Rotation in church office. The Presbyteries have voted against the rotary system for the offices of elder and deacon. The Assemblies of 1923 and 1929 declined to send down an amendment to the Book of Church Order on this matter. (A. D. 1922, p. 71; M. G. A. 1921, p. 68; 1922, p. 73; 1923, p. 59; 1929, p. 81.)

294. Status of elder licensed to preach. An elder who is licensed to preach does not lose his powers as an elder. (A. D. 1922, p. 75; M. G. A. 1897, p. 43.)

295. Pastor not the Session. The pastor of the church which has no elders does not constitute the Session. (A. D. 1922, p. 84; M. G. A. 1896, p. 610.)

296. Representative of a church. No one can represent a church except an elder of that particular church. (A. D. 1922, p. 85; M. G. A. 1887, pp. 204, 208-211.)

297. **Jurisdiction of Session over local organizations.** "All organizations of the local church are under the jurisdiction and control of the Session as to the object for which funds are raised, the method by which they are raised, and the channel through which they are distributed. Whether the said organizations shall be required to send their offerings through the local treasurer is a matter for the Session to determine." (A. D. 1922, pp. 86, 87; M. G. A. 1915, p. 77.)

298. **Electing ruling elders not present at Presbytery.** It is competent for a Presbytery to choose as its commissioners to the General Assembly any ruling elder under its jurisdiction. (A. D. 1922, p. 128; M. G. A. 1890, p. 46; 1896, p. 574.)

299. **Number of officers to be elected not to be dictated by Session.** The necessity for additional officers is usually seen by the elders in their conferences. Frequently they consider the matter and decide to suggest to the congregation the election of a definite number. The congregation is called to meet for the election of additional ruling elders or deacons, as the case may be. The Session has not the authority to indicate the number either of elders or deacons to be elected. When the congregation meets in accordance with the call the congregation, and not the elders, shall decide how many shall be elected and the method of procedure. According to paragraph 146, Book of Church Order, the congregation may proceed by nomination or by private ballot without nomination, as the congregation may prefer. The elders may suggest that the congregation elect a certain number. If the congregation does not desire to elect this number, it can, by vote of the majority of those present, decline to do so. The power to elect officers is entirely with

the congregation. (B. Ch. O., par. 15, 98-99 and 145-146.)

300. Name of member cannot be stricken from roll. The Session cannot strike the name of a church member from the roll. There are only four ways of changing a member's relation to a church:

1. By transferring name to roll of non-communing members. (B. Ch. O., par. 256.)
2. By dismission.
3. By excommunication.
4. By death.

There is no provision in our constitution or Book of Church Order for demission, erasing, or dropping the name of a member now in good and regular standing.

301. Membership to applicant refused by Session. The Session is the sole judge of the qualifications of persons asking for membership. The certificate of dismission may be regular and presented within the time limits of the law, yet the Session may have knowledge of certain conduct of the applicant which disqualifies him from membership. They may, upon the reception of this knowledge, decline to receive the applicant into membership, either on certificate or profession of faith. (Hodge: What is Presbyterian Law? p. 144.)

302. Special Session not to be appointed. The General Assembly as far back as 1823 and 1824 held that it was "unconstitutional for a Presbytery to appoint a 'special Session composed of elders belonging to different congregations' even to try a case of discipline. In the decision of 1824 the Assembly stated that 'no Presbytery has authority, according to the constitution of our Church, to delegate to a committee power to perform such acts as those'—to sit in judgment upon a member of the church and an elder, and condemn and suspend him." (Hodge: What is Presbyterian Law? pp. 126, 127.)

303. The Session not the only body that can give a letter of dismission. The Session of the church is not the only body that can grant a letter of dismission.

1. In the case of a dissolved church, the Presbytery may grant letters of dismission.

2. In a judicial case, the Presbytery may order the Session to grant a member a letter of dismission. Upon the refusal of the Session to grant the letter, the Presbytery may assume jurisdiction and issue the letter.

3. In the same case the Presbytery and Session may refuse to obey the order of the Synod to grant a member a letter of dismission. In that case it would be competent for the Synod to grant a letter of dismission in order that justice may be done.

304. Preparation of the reports of the Session to Presbytery. *When to report.* The Session, having read carefully the blanks, with instructions, should meet as early as possible after the last Sabbath in March and fill them out. The treasurers of all departments of the church should have their reports ready to present to the Session, or in the hands of the pastor or clerk of Session. Every report should then be filled out in accordance with the instructions on these blanks and suggestions given above. Blank work sheets may be obtained from the Presbyterian Committee on Religious Education and Publication, Richmond, Virginia. When these reports have all been completed and adopted by the Session, the clerk of Session should record in the records of the Session such reports as the Presbytery directs shall be recorded. This should be done just as soon as possible. When all the reports have been completed they should be sent at once to the stated clerk of Presbytery. Thus the stated clerk of Presbytery will be able to enter them on the summary blanks for the Assembly before the Presbytery meets. It is very important that the stated clerk should do this before he goes to Presbytery, as he will be too busy at Presbytery with other business to give the reports proper attention.

305. **The statistical blank.** The information gathered by this blank includes:

A. *A report on membership* embracing the following: number of elders, deacons, number added on examination and certificate; whole number of members; number of baptisms, infant and adult; total Sabbath school enrollment.

B. *A report of benevolent funds collected.* It is a summary report, combining the reports of the Sabbath school, church societies, and the church all in one. It should embrace all amounts which pass through an authorized treasurer. The combined report embraces funds contributed to the following causes: 1. Foreign Missions; 2. Assembly's Home Missions; 3. Christian Education and Ministerial Relief; 4. Religious Education and Publication; 5. Assembly's Training School for Lay Workers; 6. Bible cause; 7. Synod's Home Missions; 8. Orphans' Homes; 9. Educational institutions; 10. Presbytery's Home Missions.

C. *A report on "local church work,"* embracing: pastors' salaries actually paid, direct and indirect; current expenses; congregational missions; building expense.

D. *Miscellaneous contributions.*

306. **Special gifts.** Special gifts should be eliminated as far as possible from our statistics. In almost every instance, they can be classified under some one of our regular causes of benevolence. There is a disposition to place more emphasis upon our smaller special gifts than upon our larger regular gifts. It is not so impor-

tant how these gifts shall appear in our statistics as how they appear to God. Few of us will remember our gifts very long. God will not forget them.

307. Danger of counting gifts twice. Most, if not all the organizations of the local church, such as the Sunday school, young people's organizations, women's auxiliary, etc., raise funds for support and benevolences. Some of these organizations deposit such funds in the hands of the treasurer of the local church. They are, in turn, paid out to the causes designated by the organizations contributing them. When the church year closes, each organization makes a report to the Session upon blanks provided. A statement of funds paid to the treasurer is a part of this report; e. g., the Sunday school makes an offering of one hundred dollars to Sunday School Extension. This money was paid to the treasurer of the local church at the time it was raised. When he makes his report for the whole church the one hundred dollars is included in the funds collected by the church and any other organization of the church. The Sunday school report should show one hundred dollars given, but it should not be counted again when the total gifts for Sunday School Extension is made up for the whole church. If, however, there should be any funds that have not gone through the hands of the treasurer, they should be counted.

308. Corrections. All corrections should be made before sending the reports to the stated clerk of Presbytery. The figures, the totals, and additions should be gone over and verified. Every figure should be clear and legible. If the church has more than one pastor, this should be indicated in the report. The stated clerk, not knowing this, may give only the name of the regular pastor. The salary should be placed opposite each name.

309. Where to send reports. These reports should be sent to the stated clerk and not direct to Presbytery. Above all, they should not be placed in the Session book, expecting the stated clerk to find them. He will probably not see them, and they will come back to the church, in the Session book. If the churches will comply with these instructions, much more accurate and reliable reports will be made to the General Assembly. It is sometimes the case that a church forgets to send up its reports and finds them after the Presbytery has adjourned. Sessions should not expect the stated clerk to enter them at this late date. He has completed his work, made his additions, and transferred his summaries. The changing of a single column will necessitate making corrections all through the reports. The result will be errors which he will not see. These errors will go up to the General Assembly and may never be corrected. Some Presbyteries have the reports sent to the chairman of the committee in Presbytery to prepare for Presbytery. After years of experience, it has been found that the stated clerk, having all the reports in his hands, can make out the best and most complete report.

310. Payment of dues to Presbytery. The stated clerk or treasurer of Presbytery will send a statement of the dues or contingent fund which is to pay the expenses of the Presbytery and annual dues to the Synod and Assembly, the church should pay for the year, which amount is due March 31. This item of dues should be made a part of the regular church budget and should be paid out of the current expense fund of the church. A check for the full amount should be sent promptly to the treasurer of Presbytery. Delay in the payment of the dues is often very embarrassing, as a large part of the expenses of Presbytery are paid in April and May.

311. Church treasurers. The General Assembly strongly urges the appointment in every church of a treasurer of benevolences, who shall receive and forward promptly all benevolent and special funds. Where such a treasurer is appointed, funds collected by the Sabbath school and all church organizations for benevolences should be turned over to this special benevolent treasurer of the church to be forwarded by him to the beneficiaries. This plan will insure the keeping of benevolent funds and current expense funds entirely separate, the prompt forwarding of benevolent funds, and the assuring of accurate reports at the end of the church year. (Cf. par. 307.)

The Assembly further directs that only such funds as pass through the regular treasurer should be reported by the church. Individual members who desire to send funds to any benevolent cause of the church should first make a report of the amount and the cause and place the funds in the hands of the treasurer of benevolences, so that a correct record may be kept. Under the heading "Miscellaneous Contributions," only such funds as pass through the hands of the regular treasurer should be reported.

312. Papers to be recorded. "While it is important to make a record of all the proceedings of the Session, this does not necessarily require the copying at length on the record book of all the papers adopted by it, unless so directed by Presbytery." (A. D. 1922, p. 86; M. G. A. 1901, p. 22.) Some Presbyteries require the recording of the statistical report, and sometimes the Sabbath school report. If it is required, then the Session should obey this order, otherwise it is largely in the discretion of the Session as to what papers shall be copied. The clerk should keep on file all papers adopted, whether recorded or not.

313. Matters for Session to decide. The general statement by the Assembly leaves the matter of making record of baptisms (which is not a sessional act) and of congregational meetings held in accordance with the order of the Session "a matter of discretion with the Session." (See par. 274.)

314. The prayer meeting. "Meetings of the congregation for prayer should be held under the direction of the Session. They may be maintained statedly where this is possible, or at seasons specially appointed where stated meetings are impracticable. They should be conducted by the pastor or by some member of the Session, or by any duly qualified member of the church, or by any other person who has been invited by the pastor or Session.

"When the church has no pastor, and frequently when it has, the prayer meeting may be conducted by the men of the church, by the young people, or by any other organization, when so authorized by the Session.

"The exercises appropriate for the prayer meeting are prayer, praise, reading of the Scriptures, instruction and exhortation. Frequently these may be secured through Bible study, the study of missions, or stewardship, or church history, or some other subject relating to the church and its program, or in the presentation of missionary and other religious pageants.

"The pastor and Session should endeavor to make the prayer meeting spiritual, interesting and vital.

"The people of the church, young and old, should be encouraged to lead in public prayer and in other ways to have an active part in the prayer meeting." (B. Ch. O., par. 339-342.)

315. Forms for Sessions.

1. *Opening of meetings.*

Date..

In accordance with the call of the moderator, the Session met at............................ The Session was opened with prayer by.................................... The following were present............................... (If it is a joint meeting with the deacons, note the names of those present.)

2. *Reception of members.* The letters of dismission of Mr. and Mrs. A. B. from the..................church were presented by the pastor (or clerk of Session). They were received and cordially commended to the fellowship of the members of the church.

Mr. C. D. presented himself to be received on profession of his faith in Christ. After satisfactory examination, he was received and cordially commended to the fellowship of the members of the church. (When the member being received is unbaptized, the following should be added: Baptism will be administered when he is received publicly.)

3. *Letter of dismission.* Mr. or Mrs. A. B. requested a letter of dismission from this church to......................... church. The request was granted and the clerk was directed to issue the letter.

NOTE: When parents have children who are members or baptized members, the letter should always include them, mentioning each by name.

4. *Election of representative to Presbytery or Synod.* Ruling Elder A. B., principal, and Ruling Elder C. D., alternate, were chosen to represent this church in the meeting of Presbytery (or Synod), which is to meet at................on the.........day of...................

5. *Congregational meeting called.* After conference (may be with deacons), the Session ordered a congre-

gational meeting to be called on next Sunday..........day of................, for the purpose of considering the matter of increasing the salary of the pastor for the next year.

6. *Report on congregational meeting.* The secretary of the congregational meeting held on........day of.......... called by the Session to consider changing or increasing the salary of the pastor for the next year, reported to the Session that the congregational meeting was held and the motion to increase the salary $............ for the next year was unanimously adopted. In accordance with this action, the Session respectfully requested the Presbytery of................., at its next meeting, to give the church permission to change the call of its pastor so as to increase the salary $.............. per annum.

7. *Election of ruling elders and deacons.* The Session directed that a congregational meeting be called on...........................for the purpose of electing additional elders and (or) deacons.

8. *Inviting a minister to moderate the Session.* The Session invited Rev.....................to moderate the Session today, inasmuch as the church is without a pastor.

9. *Citation.* Dear Brother:

This letter is to notify you that the Session of this church, having heard rumors affecting your Christian character, and, after investigation, having found ground for these rumors, charges you with................, and hereby cites you to appear before the Session on ....day of................ to stand trial on this charge, which is against the peace, unity and purity of the church. Signed...

Clerk of Session.

10. *A committee appointed to perform a definite work.* Messrs..........., ... and.......... were appointed

a committee to........................ (here describe the object for which they were appointed.)

11. *Indictment.* In the name of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, the Session (or Presbytery) of.......................... charges you with.........................., which conduct is against the peace, unity and purity of the church and the honor and majesty of the Lord Jesus Christ as the King and Head thereof.

By order of the Session (or Presbytery) of................, or done in Session (or Presbytery) at............................. on...........................

Signed..., Clerk.

CHAPTER XVII

THE PRESBYTERY

316. The Presbytery is the next court in the order of gradation. It "consists of all the ministers and one ruling elder from each church within a certain district." (B. Ch. O., par. 70.)

317. Organized by Synod. One of the powers of Synod is "to erect new Presbyteries." (B. Ch. O., par. 83.)

318. Stated meetings. "The Presbytery shall meet at least twice a year on its own adjournment." (B. Ch. O., par. 78.)

319. Called meetings. "When any emergency shall require a meeting earlier than the time to which the Presbytery stands adjourned, the moderator shall, at the request, or with the concurrence, of two ministers and two ruling elders of different churches, call a special meeting." (B. Ch. O., par. 78.)

320. Called meeting; time required for notice. "Notice of the special meeting shall be sent not less than ten days in advance to each minister and to the Session of every church without a pastor." (B. Ch. O., par. 78.)

321. Called meeting; business to be transacted. "In the notice, the purpose of the meeting shall be stated, and no business other than that named in the notice is to be transacted." (B. Ch. O., par. 78; A. D. 1922, p. 105; M. G. A. 1905, p. 44.)

322. Adjourned meetings. The Presbytery may adjourn to meet at a fixed date, or at the call of the moderator, and at such adjourned meeting, any business that may come before the Presbytery may be transacted.

323. Moderator. "The Presbytery elects a moderator at each stated meeting. It is his duty to preside over the stated meeting and all adjourned or called meetings, and he shall open the next meeting with a sermon, unless highly inconvenient, and shall hold the chair until a new moderator is chosen." (B. Ch. O., par. 53.)

324. When moderator is absent. When the moderator is absent "the last moderator present, or the oldest minister in attendance, shall open the next meeting with a sermon unless it be highly inconvenient, and shall hold the chair until a new moderator be chosen." (B. Ch. O., par. 53.)

325. Procedure when moderator is a ruling elder. When the moderator is a ruling elder "the preaching of the opening sermon, or any other official duty, the performance of which requires the exercise of functions pertaining only to the teaching elder, shall be remitted by him for execution to such minister of the Word, being a member of the court, as he may select." (B. Ch. O., par. 53.)

326. Change of time and place of meeting. "In any extraordinary emergency," the moderator "may, by circular letter, change the time or place, or both, of meetings to which the court stands adjourned, giving reasonable notice thereof." (B. Ch. O., par. 53.)

327. Expenses of representatives to be paid. "The expenses of ministers and ruling elders in their attendance on the courts shall be defrayed by the bodies which they respectively represent, except that the expenses of commissioners to the General Assembly shall be paid out of the treasury of the General Assembly." (B. Ch. O., par. 56.)

328. Quorum. "Any three ministers belonging to the Presbytery, together with at least one ruling elder, being met at the time and place appointed, shall be a quorum competent to proceed to business." (B. Ch. O., par. 73.)

329. Fixing a quorum. "A majority vote of those present at a stated meeting may fix its own quorum, provided it is not smaller than the quorum stated in this paragraph." (B. Ch. O., par. 73.)

330. Meetings opened and closed with prayer. "Every meeting of the Presbytery shall be opened and closed with prayer, and in closing the final session a psalm or hymn may be sung and the benediction pronounced." (B. Ch. O., par. 55.)

331. Certificates of appointment for ruling elders. "Every ruling elder not known to the Presbytery shall produce a certificate of his regular appointment from the session of the church which he represents." (B. Ch. O., par. 72.)

332. Membership of minister. "A minister shall be required to hold his membership in the Presbytery within whose bounds he resides, unless there are reasons which are satisfactory to his Presbytery why he should not do so." (B. Ch. O., par. 71.)

333. Obligation to be signed by ministers received. The obligations required of ministers at their ordination shall be subscribed to by all ministers admitted into Presbytery. The usual form is as follows:

(1) "I believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice.

(2) "I sincerely receive and adopt the Confession of Faith and the Catechisms of this Church as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures; and I further promise that if at any time I find myself out of accord with any of the fundamentals of this system of doctrine I will, on my own initiative,

make known to my Presbytery the change which has taken place in my views since the assumption of this ordination vow.

(3) "I approve of the government and discipline of the Presbyterian Church in the United States.

(4) "I promise subjection to my brethren in the Lord.

(5) "I have been induced, as far as I know my own heart, to seek the office of the holy ministry from love to God and a sincere desire to promote His glory in the gospel of His Son.

(6) "I promise to be zealous and faithful in maintaining the truths of the Gospel and the purity and peace of the Church, whatever persecution or opposition may arise unto me on that account.

(7) "I engage to be faithful and diligent in the exercise of all my duties as a Christian and a minister of the Gospel, whether personal or relative, private or public; and to endeavor by the grace of God to adorn the profession of the Gospel in my manner of life, and to walk with exemplary piety before the flock of which God shall make me overseer.

"I do sincerely receive and subscribe to the above obligation as a just and true exhibition of my faith and principles, and do resolve and promise to exercise my ministry in conformity thereunto."

Signed..

(B. Ch. O., par. 75, 136.)

334. Powers of a Presbytery.

1. "To receive and issue appeals, complaints and references brought before it in an orderly manner.

2. "To exercise authority in cases in which the Sessions cannot act.

3. "To assume original jurisdiction.

4. "To receive under its care candidates for the ministry.

5. "To examine and license candidates for the ministry.

6. "To receive and dismiss ministers.

7. "To ordain and install ministers.

8. "To remove and judge ministers.

9. "To review the record of church sessions, redress whatever they might have done contrary to order.

10. "To see that churches observe the constitution of the Church.

11. "To establish and dissolve pastoral relations at request of one or both parties, or where the interests of religion imperatively demand it.

12. "To set apart evangelists to their proper work.

13. "To require ministers to devote themselves to their sacred calling.

14. "To censure delinquent ministers.

15. "To see that lawful injunctions of higher court are obeyed.

16. "To condemn erroneous opinions which injure the purity or peace of the Church.

17. "To visit churches for the purpose of inquiring into and redressing the evils that may have arisen in them.

18. "To unite and divide churches.

19. "To form and receive new churches.

20. "To take special oversight of churches without pastors.

21. "To dissolve churches.

22. "To concert measures for the enlargement of the Church within its bounds.

23. "To order whatever pertains to the spiritual welfare of the churches under its care.

24. "To appoint commissioners to the General Assembly.

25. "To propose measures to Synod and General Assembly for common advantage of the Church at large." (B. Ch. O., par. 76.)

335. Power to install a pastor. "A pastor should be installed by the Presbytery or by a commission appointed by the Presbytery." (A. D. 1922, p. 42; M. G. A. 1896, p. 610; B. Ch. O., par 93.)

336. Business. The following outline will give the *principal items* of business usually transacted by a Presbytery. This is given because many elders who have never attended a Presbytery do not know what is done there:

1. *To receive ministers.* The examination for the reception of a minister is chiefly upon his "views" on theology and not upon his "knowledge." When the examination is made with a view to licensure and ordination, it is upon his "knowledge," and should be full and thorough.

2. *To receive candidates* for the ministry and subsequently license and ordain them after they have completed the usual course of study.

3. *To act upon calls* from churches within the Presbytery and arrange for the installation of the ministers called.

4. *To appoint executive and permanent committees* who shall have charge of the work of Presbytery between the stated meetings. The most important of these are the four executive committees of Foreign Missions, Home Missions, Christian Education and Ministerial Relief, and Religious Education and Publication and the Permanent Committee on Stewardship and Men's Work.

5. *To appoint examining committees*, who shall conduct the usual examinations required in the case of

the reception of ministers and the licensure and ordination of ministers.

6. *To appoint standing committees,* to whom the business coming before Presbytery is referred for consideration. They are appointed at the opening of each stated meeting of Presbytery by the moderator. These committees report to the Presbytery before its close, making recommendations, etc., which, if adopted by the Presbytery, become the acts of the Presbytery.

7. *To review the records of Sessions* which are sent to the spring meeting of Presbytery.

8. *To prepare the annual reports* of the Presbytery to the General Assembly. This constitutes an important part of the business of the spring meeting. When the churches send up to the stated clerk of Presbytery full reports in advance of the meeting, the stated clerk is usually able to read his reports in full to the Presbytery for final adoption. These reports are sent by the stated clerk to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly and become the record of the church and Presbytery for that year.

337. **Limiting pastorates.** The Assembly has declined to send down to the Presbyteries an overture favoring limiting a call for a pastor to a period of five years.

338. **Rights and privileges in transitu.** A minister dismissed by his Presbytery to another Presbytery remains under the jurisdiction of his own Presbytery until he has been received into the Presbytery to which he was dismissed. During that time he is entitled to all the rights and privileges of the Presbytery dismissing him. (A. D. 1922, p. 39; M. G. A. 1894, p. 234.)

339. **Stated supply not recognized.** "The relation of stated supply is not recognized in our Form of Gov-

ernment. The Assembly, therefore, recommends that vacant churches be grouped as soon as practicable into pastoral charges or into fields under the care of evangelists." (A. D. 1922, p. 47; M. G. A. 1889, p. 594.)

The custom, however, has grown in the church of placing ministers over groups of churches as stated supplies, and they are so reported in the statistical tables in the minutes of the General Assembly. In 1913 the Assembly declined to make a change in the Book of Church Order so as to eliminate and correct the evil of the stated supply system. (A. D. 1922, p. 48; M. G. A. 1913, p. 29.)

340. Ordination sine titulo. *Question:* Has a Presbytery the right to ordain a licentiate to the work of the Gospel ministry, simply because he desires it, although neither one nor more churches have requested that he be ordained?

Answer: "Every office in the Church of God, according to the Scriptures and the Standards of our Church, is a definite charge; and hence no man can lawfully be ordained to the Gospel ministry unless it be to the performance of some work appropriate to that office according to the constitution. (B. Ch. O., par. 101.) And as one great evidence of a divine vocation is a call from a particular church, no man ought to be ordained, except in cases extraordinary, without such a call. Moreover, as persons are liable to mistake their calling, and as the office of the ministry is a permanent one, by divine institution, Presbyteries ought to exercise great caution in ordaining evangelists, lest the ministry be filled with intruders, and the Church be afflicted with a vagrant and secularized clergy. Nor ought they ever to do so until full proof has been made of the licentiate, by the Presbytery which ordains him, and it has received such a favorable report concerning him from the churches as gives the promise of wide usefulness." (A. D. 1922, p. 48; M. G. A. 1865, p. 362.)

341. Supplying a church outside our connection. "There is nothing in the law of the Church to prevent a minister of our connection from preaching the Gospel to any church where he has the consent of his own Presbytery." (A. D. 1922, p. 45; M. G. A. 1880, p. 196.) "But it is contrary to our Standards for one of our ministers to remain a permanent supply of a church of another denomination, e. g., a congregational church." (A. D. 1922, p. 45; M. G. A. 1869, p. 376.)

342. Power of Presbytery to dissolve the pastoral relation. "The Presbytery has power . . . to establish the pastoral relation and to dissolve it at the request of one or both of the parties, or where the interests of religion imperatively demand it.

"While the Presbytery clearly has such power, the Assembly decides that a Presbytery taking such action should be thoroughly convinced that the interests of religion imperatively demand it." (See chapter XXX on Dissolution of Pastoral Relation.) (A. D. 1922, pp. 44, 45; M. G. A. 1880, p. 196.)

343. Later deliverances. The dissolution of the pastoral relation, in order to a convenient grouping of churches, is within the prerogative of the Presbytery." (A. D. 1922, p. 45; M. G. A. 1902, p. 259.)

344. Dismissing ministers to other ecclesiastical bodies. "The General Assembly judges it to be sufficient and proper in all such cases to give a certificate of character and good standing; and in this there is no intention to reflect on the minister withdrawing, or on the body to which he goes." (A. D. 1922, p. 37; M. G. A. 1876, p. 238.)

345. Dismissing a church to another ecclesiastical body. In this case, the Presbytery should authorize the stated clerk to furnish a letter of transfer to the church as a congregation. The transfer of the church property should be in accordance with the laws of the State in which the church is located. (A. D. 1922, p. 90; M. G. A. 1915, p. 28.)

346. **Ordained ministers not members of the church.** Ordained ministers ought not to be considered members and to have their names enrolled as such. (M. G. A., O. S., 1843; p. 176; M. G. A. 1927, p. 49.) Members of the church are received and dismissed by the Session. The minister or pastor is never received or dismissed by the Session, but by the Presbytery.

347. **Membership of a minister when divested of office.** "When a Presbytery shall divest a minister of his office without censure, or depose him without excommunication, it shall assign him to membership in some particular church, subject to the approval of the Session of that church." (B. Ch. O., par. 302.)

348. **Receiving ministers from other denominations.** Ministers received from any other evangelical ecclesiastical bodies, except the Presbyteries of our own church, are to be so recorded. (A. D. 1922, p. 37; M. G. A. 1918, p. 53.)

349. **Examining a minister when received.** The General Assembly in 1835 decided that every Presbytery had the constitutional right to examine all seeking connection with it. In 1837 the Assembly made it imperative in Presbyteries to examine such applicants, at least on experimental religion, theology and church government. The action has been reaffirmed some six or seven times by subsequent Assemblies. The Form of Government says "Ministers seeking admission to a Presbytery shall be examined on experimental religion, and also touching their views in theology and church government. If applicants come from other

denominations, the Presbytery shall also require them to answer in the affirmative the questions put to candidates at their ordination." (B. Ch. O., par. 74.)

350. Failure of Presbyteries to act. "If by reason of the failure of a number of Presbyteries to act, or to report action, on any proposed amendment to the Standards, the response of the Presbyteries is not satisfactory to the succeeding General Assembly, it may defer action for one year. In that event, the General Assembly shall urge the delinquent Presbyteries to report their judgment to the next Assembly, which shall take final action on the proposed amendment." (B. Ch. O., par. 163.)

351. Limitations of evangelistic power. "When a minister is appointed to the work of the evangelist, he is commissioned to preach the Word and administer the sacraments in foreign countries, frontier settlements, or the destitute parts of the Church; and to him may be entrusted power to organize churches, and ordain ruling elders and deacons therein." (B. Ch. O., par. 38.)

When the evangelistic power is given for a specific work, it ceases with the completion of that work. It is usual that the general evangelistic authority granted by Presbytery extends from one stated meeting of Presbytery to the next stated meeting unless specified by Presbytery when the authority is granted. "The evangelist receives his powers from the Presbytery and is primarily responsible to the Presbytery. But as the evangelist of the Synod when he passes into the different bounds of the Presbyteries passes under their immediate jurisdiction, so the evangelist who works for a local church in that work should be under the direction of the Session of that church." (A. D. 1922, p. 48; M. G. A. 1918, p. 54.)

352. Meeting beyond its bounds. "There is nothing in the constitution of our Church affecting the right of a Presbytery to meet on its own motion in regular session beyond its bounds." (A. D. 1922, p. 103; M. G. A. 1891, p. 258.)

353. Ministers transferred with territory. "When a Synod transfers any part of the territory of one Presbytery to that of another, with the churches included therein, the action of Synod transfers the ministers in the ceded territory from one Presbytery to the other without any dismission from the Presbytery to which they belonged and without any examination by the Presbytery receiving them." (A. D. 1922, pp. 101-102; M. G. A. 1894, p. 197.)

354. Overtures. An overture is a petition or question relating to doctrine or order and to all propositions tending to general laws. The right of petition or overture is an inalienable right of the Church at large. This right is limited by the General Assembly, to whom most of the overtures go, to Presbyteries and Synods. The Assembly directs that petitions or overtures of individuals shall come up to the Assembly through the lower court, either the Presbytery or the Synod. The Assembly reserves the right to receive or reject overtures coming from individuals, either within or without the Church. (A. D. 1922, p. 1097; M. G. A. 1878, p. 610.)

"The Assembly recommends that in the matter of overtures and memorials from Presbyteries, the Synod be not passed over, except in cases clearly calling for the action of the Assembly." (A. D. 1922, p. 125; M. G. A. 1894, p. 194.)

In 1921 the Assembly adopted the rule, "No overture will be considered by the Assembly until it has first been presented to a Presbytery or a Synod. If the overture is approved by a Presbytery or Synod, it will then come before the Assembly as an overture from that Presbytery or Synod. If the overture is rejected by the Presbytery or the Synod, it may then be presented to the Assembly; but the fact that it has been presented to a Presbytery or a Synod must be clearly stated on the overture." (A. D. 1922, p. 139; M. G. A. 1921, p. 70.)

The Assembly, by its standing rules, directs that all overtures to the General Assembly shall be in the hands of the stated clerk by May 1, and reserves the right to decline to consider any overture that does not come into the hands of the stated clerk by May 5. (A. D. 1922, p. 160; M. G. A. 1921, p. 70; 1929, p. 155.)

Each overture should be written on only one side of the paper, and only one overture on the sheet. Each overture should be signed by the stated clerk. All the overtures are referred to standing committees. No standing committee has the power to change or amend an overture or to recommend a change or amendment to the Assembly as an answer to the overture. (M. G. A. 1928, p. 47; M. G. A. 1929, p. 121.)

"No committee has the right to consider or report on overtures or papers of any kind which are not placed in its hands by the Assembly." (M. G. A. 1929, p. 121.)

It is the duty of every committee to report back to the Assembly on every overture placed in its hands. (M. G. A. 1929, p. 121.)

Important that duplication of identical overtures be checked. "A wider use of the Digest (and this book on Presbyterian Law) would check the duplication of identical overtures year after year, give greater unity to the deliverances of the highest court of the Church, and so command for them greater respect and more general observance. It would also aid in crystallizing the methods and unifying the constructions of law in different parts of the Church. A large portion of the overtures that go up annually asks for constructions on points already competently decided, and are sent up in ignorance of the fact, or they represent such a restless desire for change as shows that the decisions of the court of last resort are undervalued, and forbids that any policy should come to be regarded as settled or any construction of law final; or else they reveal a wish to press individual opinion or local convenience upon the whole Church. In this way it comes that confidence is lost in the Assembly's adhering to its own decisions, and uncertainty invests the most carefully conceived precedents." (Rev. W. A. Alexander, D. D., preface Supplement Digest, p. 5, 1898.)

355. Duties of chairmen of standing committees. The chairman of a standing committee should call together the committee of which he is a member just as soon as possible after reports, papers, etc., have been referred to his committee. The committee should give careful consideration, and when a conclusion has been reached the chairman should write out these conclusions, *not on scraps of paper,* but on paper of uniform size, which the Stated Clerk will supply. *No abbreviations* such as "com" for committee, or "ch." for chairman, etc., should be used. The report should be written only on one side of the paper. Care should be taken that names and initials are correct, and that the entire report is written in good English. The chairman should enter all changes made in the report by the court by way of amendment or otherwise. The report should not be given to the clerk until all such changes have been made in a legible way. This paragraph applies equally to chairmen of committees in Presbytery and Synod.

356. Records of Presbytery sent to Synod. The records of the Presbytery, duly signed by the stated clerk, should be sent to the Synod each year.

357. Approving minutes. The question has often been asked whether the court should "approve" or "adopt" its minutes. The General Assembly in 1890 (p. 46) said: "The minutes of a church court become its official records as soon as they are *approved* by that court." The General Assembly in 1913 said: "They become final when *adopted.*" (A. D. 1922, p. 168; M. G. A. 1913, p. 70e.)

The courts are by these actions authorized to use whichever word satisfies the conscience of their members.

358. Standing rules or manual. Presbyteries usually adopt a set of rules for their guidance. These rules should not be too elaborate, otherwise they will hinder rather than help the work of the Presbytery.

359. Treasurer of Presbytery. The stated clerk of the Presbytery should ordinarily be the treasurer. But when it is not convenient for the stated clerk to act as treasurer, a minister or ruling elder should be elected. The funds for the payment of all the expenses of the Presbytery come from dues paid by the churches. The amount needed is first estimated and then prorated to the churches on the basis of membership, the total membership being used for the estimate. While the calculation is made at the rate of a certain number of cents per member, the important thing is the total amount. A higher rate is necessary if the resident membership is used rather than the total membership. All dues from the churches should be sent to the treasurer in the spring. He should make a full statement to the spring Presbytery. Some Presbyteries have this report made in the fall. This is a matter for each Presbytery to decide. The treasurer pays all dues from the Presbytery to the Synod and General Assembly and the ordinary expenses of the Presbytery.

360. Forms for treasurer's blank. Treasurers will find the following blank helpful. It has been used for many years with good results:

No. 1

..............................Church

Dues, $...............

Date.......................................

Paid..........................., 193....

No. 1 ...., 193....

..Church

Dues to the Presbytery of.....................

..............................dollars ($...............)

For year ending March 31, 193.....

Received Payment:

...

Treasurer.

Please return this bill.

361. Treasurer's bills. This bill should be detached from the stub and mailed to the church some time in March, with the request that it be paid promptly. When the funds have been received the treasurer should mark the stub paid, giving the date of payment. He should then return the receipted bill to the treasurer of the church. Churches and Presbyteries should know that the General Assembly has directed the treasurer to pay the expenses of commissioners in proportion as the Presbyteries have paid their apportionments. (See par. 407.)

362. Printed minutes. Presbyteries should have their minutes printed. In this day of the printed page, all records should be placed in type. The preparation of the copy for the printer is very important. If possible, typewritten copy should be used. Original papers and manuscripts should be used in preference to copies. Rev. W. A. Alexander, D. D., one of the best stated clerks that the Church has ever had, replied to a question by the writer, that in every case the original paper was preferable to a copy. Errors creep in through the copy. If the copy is used, it should be carefully proof-read.

363. Editorial work of stated clerk. How much editorial work is the stated clerk authorized to do? He should have the authority to correct the English, making it grammatical, but not to change the meaning. In the rush of the meetings of Presbyteries, slight grammatical errors will be made which should be corrected before the paper is printed. The stated clerk should supply the omission of words, and the initials of a name, should correct errors in spelling and in the addition of figures or in the transfer of totals, etc. He should prepare a complete directory of the officers and the committees and print them in the minutes, giving the postoffice address of the chairman. The minutes should be printed on good paper and in good type. Cheapness should be avoided. When a sufficient number of copies of the printed minutes have accumulated they should be bound into a volume. A complete set of minutes should be kept in a safety vault. Copies of the printed minutes should be sent to those bodies who make a specialty of keeping the minutes of church courts, such as the theological seminaries, the Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and the Historical Foundation of Presbyterian and Reformed Churches in the United States, Montreat, North Carolina.

364. Discretion as to organizing a new church. Presbytery has discretion in the matter of organizing a new church. (A. D. 1922, p. 105; M. G. A. 1882, p. 571.)

365. Membership of a commission. Only those appointed by Presbytery can claim a seat in a commission. (A. D. 1922, p. 106; M. G. A. 1882, p. 571.)

366. Powers of a commission. The powers of a commission are limited to the business for which it was appointed. (A. D. 1922, p. 107; M. G. A. 1897, p. 40.)

367. Visiting brethren. Ministers in good standing in other Presbyteries or in any evangelical church may be invited to sit as visiting brethren. (B. Ch. O., par. 79.)

368. Power to assess. Among the powers of Presbytery we find "to concert measures for the enlargement of the Church within its bounds." The General Assembly has never made a deliverance covering the power of any church court to make an assessment upon its members or churches. Hodge, in "What is Presbyterian Law," page 559, says: "None of our church courts are clothed with power to assess a tax upon the churches. Apportionments to meet the expenses of the several bodies may be made, but the payment depends upon the voluntary liberality which flows from the enlightened consciences of the people, who may be confidently relied upon to return whatever is necessary for the conduct of our ecclesiastical business." (M. G. A., U. S. A., 1878, pp. 67-68.)

In 1875, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, in working out a plan to pay the expenses of commissioners, adopted the following: "That the Assembly continue its present plan (M. G. A. 1874, p. 523) for raising its contingent and commissioners' fund, with certain modifications, and urges the adoption of this scheme by all the Presbyteries, not so much as a matter of constitutional right, but as a measure of Christian courtesy and brotherly kindness, which should prompt us to help the weak and to 'bear one another's burdens.'" (M. G. A. 1875, p. 35.)

An assessment upon the churches on the per capita basis has been adopted by all the church courts for the payment of the contingent expenses of the courts. In the case of the General Assembly, it includes the payment of the commissioners' expenses to the meetings of the Assembly. The per capita basis for collecting funds to meet the contingent expenses of Presbyteries, Synods and the General Assembly is in general use and the amount is promptly paid by the churches.

369. Form of called meeting of Presbytery. (Also see par. 319.) The requirements of paragraph 78, Book of Church Order, having been complied with, I hereby call the Presbytery of..........................to meet at ....on............day of....................., 193.....

1. To receive............from the Presbytery of................

2. To place the call of..................church in the hands of Rev...................., and upon his acceptance of the call to make arrangements for his installation as pastor of this church.

.................................., Moderator.

The above is the form to be used for the reception and arrangement for the installation of a pastor. Other items may be used as the ground for calling a meeting of Presbytery, such as dissolution of pastoral relations, filling vacancies on committees, considering matters of interest to the home mission work, etc.

370. Commission for commissioners. (See paragraph 406 in Chapter on "General Assembly.")

371. Power of Presbytery to dissolve relation between an officer and a particular church. "Presbytery may dissolve the relation between a ruling elder and a particular congregation without prejudice and without petition." (A. D. 1922, p. 72; M. G. A. 1894, p. 196.)

372. Jurisdiction of Presbytery over ministers and churches in United (or Federated) Churches. "No minister can constitutionally be a member of two Presbyteries at the same time." (A. D. 1922, p. 212; M. G. A. 1887, p. 230.)

This action was taken in answer to an overture asking for a deliverance of United (or Federated) Churches that are under the jurisdiction of two Presbyteries and two Assemblies.

Each church of the United (or Federated) Church must report only the number of officers and members which belong to one Presbytery and one Assembly. The pastor or stated supply should be reported only by the Presbytery to which he belongs.

"The form of government of the Presbyterian Church in the United States makes it impossible that a minister, officer or church be under the jurisdiction of more than one ecclesiastical court of same grade." (A. D. 1922, p. 39; M. G. A. 1915, p. 28.)

"The Assembly reaffirmed these past deliverances, but did not make them retroactive. They are to serve for the future guidance of churches and Presbyteries." (M. G. A. 1923, p. 59.)

373. **Dual membership of foreign missionaries.** "In regard to the overture from missionaries of the Mid-China mission, renewing their request, made to previous Assemblies, that they be permitted to unite with the native Chinese brethren in forming provincially co-operative Presbyteries, of which they shall be members, while at the same time retaining full connection with their respective home Presbyteries, the Assembly reminded them that this request has already been denied by three Assemblies as inconsistent with our form of government. But, as the Executive Committee of Foreign Missions suggested, the Assembly approved of the expressed desire on the part of our missions in Korea and China to co-operate with other Presbyterian missions in the organization of one united Presbyterian Church in each of those fields; and it authorized our missionaries to take all such steps as may be necessary, and in their judgment in conform-

ity with Presbyterian principles, to secure the independence of the proposed United Presbyterian Churches in Korea and China." (A. D. 1922, p. 212; M. G. A. 1905, p. 35.)

"In response to the request of Rev. R. Clyde Douglas, of the Mid-China mission, for permission to change his membership from the Presbytery of St. Johns, Florida, to the Presbytery of Kashing, China, we recommend that the General Assembly grant St. Johns Presbytery permission to dismiss Rev. Clyde R. Douglas to the Presbytery of Kashing." (A. D. 1922, p. 212; M. G. A. 1922, p. 59.)

"In response to the overture from the Presbytery of Harmony asking the Assembly to define the proper relation of foreign missionaries to the native Presbyteries in mission fields, the Assembly would answer that no minister can be a full member of more than one Presbytery, and providential circumstances must decide whether it would be wise for such membership to be held in home or foreign Presbyteries in particular cases; but the relationship ought to be one of affectionate interest and concern for the foreign Presbytery, even if membership is to be retained in the home Presbytery. Affiliate membership in a Presbytery, however, is unknown to our Constitution." (M. G. A. 1925, p. 68.)

374. **Suspended minister to be reported.** "A minister indefinitely suspended from the ministry should be so reported." (A. D. 1922, p. 40; M. G. A. 1894, p. 201.)

CHAPTER XVIII

THE SYNOD

375. General statement. The Synod is the third court in the order of gradation. A Synod must have at least three Presbyteries. The State lines usually determine the size and boundary lines of the Synods. There are two exceptions to this rule among the Synods of our Church: Appalachia and Snedecor Memorial (colored).

376. Membership "The Synod consists of all the ministers and one ruling elder from each church in a district comprising at least three Presbyteries. The qualifications for membership in the Synod and the Presbytery are the same." (B. Ch. O., par. 80.)

377. Meetings. "The Synod shall meet at least once each year." The time fixed by custom for the meeting is in the fall. The Book of Church Order makes provision for adjourned and called meetings, just as it does for the Presbytery. (B. Ch. O., par. 81.)

378. Quorum. "Seven ministers and at least three ruling elders shall be a quorum, provided that not more than three of said ministers belong to one Presbytery; provided, further, that in the case of a Synod composed of only three Presbyteries, any seven ministers representing any two of the Presbyteries, together with three ruling elders, shall be a quorum." (B. Ch. O., par. 81.)

379. Powers.

1. "To receive and issue all appeals, complaints and references regularly brought up from the Presbyteries.

2. "To review records of Presbyteries.

3. "To redress what may have been done contrary to order.

4. "To see that Presbyteries
    (a) "Observe the constitution of the Church.
    (b) "Obey the lawful injunctions of the higher courts.

5. "To erect new Presbyteries.

6. "To unite and divide Presbyteries which were before erected.

7. "To appoint ministers to such work proper to their office as may fall under the jurisdiction of Synod.

8. "To take such orders with respect to Presbyteries, Sessions, and churches as may be in conformity with the Word of God and the established rules.

9. "To concert measures for promoting the prosperity and enlargement of the Church within its bounds.

10. "To propose to the General Assembly such measures as may be of common advantage to the whole church." (B. Ch. O., par. 83.)

380. Further duties. "It shall be the duty of the Synod

1. "To keep full and fair records of its proceedings.

2. "To submit them annually to the inspection of the General Assembly.

3. "To report to it the number of its Presbyteries, and of the members thereof.

4. "To report all important changes which may have occurred within its bounds during the year."

(B. Ch. O., par. 84.)

381. The business of Synod. The Synod requires certain reports from the Presbyteries. The character of the business differs materially from that of the Presbytery, on the one hand, and from that of the General Assembly on the other hand. The business of the Synod is state-wide in character and is conducted by Synodical organization. It embraces such work as

Synodical home missions, education, orphans' homes, etc. The following outline will give the principal items of business transacted by a Synod.

1. To receive the annual reports from the executive and permanent committees.

2. To receive the annual reports of the boards of trustees of educational institutions, orphans' homes, and any other educational or benevolent work of the Synod.

3. To appoint standing committees to whom all these reports shall be referred for consideration, and to report back to Synod making recommendations concerning the future progress of the various departments of the work.

382. **Called meeting.** "When any emergency shall require a meeting of the Synod earlier than the time to which it stands adjourned, the moderator shall, at the request or with the concurrence of ten ministers and ten ruling elders, representing at least three Presbyteries, call a special meeting. Should the moderator be for any reason unable to act, the stated clerk shall, under the same requirements, issue the call. Notice of this special meeting shall be sent not less than fifteen days in advance to each minister and to the Session of every church without a pastor. In the notice, the purpose of the meeting is to be stated, and no other business than that named in the notice is to be transacted." (B. Ch. O., par. 82.)

383. **Reports.** The Synod does not make a report to any other church court, though the records are submitted for review to the General Assembly each year. They should be signed in ink by the stated clerk.

384. **How Synods are organized.** Synods are erected by the General Assembly. Changes in the boundary lines between Synods are made by the General Assembly.

385. Legalizing meetings of Synods. Meetings of Synod held out of time and place may be legalized by the General Assembly. This matter is discussed more fully under "The General Assembly." (See par. 399.)

386. Amending record of lower court. Synod has no power to amend the record of a lower court. (A. D. 1922, p. 124; M. G. A. 1877, p. 443.)

387. Meeting of Presbytery by order of Synod.

1. The Presbytery may ask the Synod to order a meeting during the sessions of Synod. In this instance, the Presbytery must specify the objects for which the Presbytery is called to meet. No other business can be transacted legally. (A. D. 1922, p. 122; M. G. A. 1867, p. 139; 1869, p. 380.)

2. The Synod may order the Presbytery or the constituent Presbyteries to meet.

(1) "The Synod has power to order a Presbytery to meet and to transact such business as in the judgment of Synod is immediately connected with the good order and well-being of the Church.

(2) "Such meetings are of the nature of pro re nata meetings, the rules laid down in our book for the regulation of such called meetings ought to regulate and govern in all cases these meetings ordered by Synod, except when ordered to meet during the sessions of Synod on business immediately connected with the proceedings of that body. In such cases the Presbytery may be required to meet at once by order of the Synod." (A. D. 1922, p. 122; M. G. A. 1870, p. 515.)

A similar action was taken in 1886. (A. D. 1922, p. 123; M. G. A. 1886, p. 47.)

388. Other deliverances on meetings of Presbytery ordered by Synod. The General Assembly, in 1848, took the following action on meetings of Presbytery ordered by Synod:

"*Resolved,* 1. That Synod has power to order a Presbytery to meet and to transact such business as in the judgment of the Synod is intimately connected with the good order and well-being of the Church.

"*Resolved,* 2. That as such meetings are of the nature of pro re nata meetings, the rules that are laid down in our book for the regulation of such called meetings ought to regulate and govern in all cases meetings ordered by Synod, except when ordered to meet during the sessions of Synod on business immediately connected with the proceedings of that body. In such cases, the Presbytery may be required to meet at once by order of the Synod." (Baird's Digest, p. 249; M. G. A. 1848, p. 60.)

The General Assembly, in 1870, in answer to an overture from the Synod of North Carolina requesting the Assembly "to provide for the Synod's calling a meeting of Presbyteries during the sessions of Synod for the transaction of their own or the Synod's business when the Presbyteries have failed to appoint such meeting," referred the Synod to the action of the Assembly in 1848 and quoted above.

In 1886, the Assembly said "the Synod had this power to call a meeting of Presbyteries" to attend to any of the interests of religion within the bounds of Synod which require immediate attention and which are specified in the call." (A. D. 1922, p. 123; M. G. A. 1886, p. 47.)

In 1929, the Assembly, in answer to an overture from the Synod of South Carolina on the question of meeting of Presbyteries during the meeting of Synod, ordered by the Synod, giving the reasons for the overture, that frequently Presbyteries are ordered to meet when they have not the properly qualified elders present to participate in that meeting, and they decide questions that should be considered at a full stated meeting of Presbytery.

"The Assembly disapproves the abuse of this privilege, and calls attention to the objections arising from a practice of deciding important questions in called meetings of Presbyteries, and suggests that such meetings be reduced by the Presbyteries themselves to a minimum and confined to routine business." (M. G. A. 1929, p. 82.)

389. **Changing Presbyterial boundaries.** Synod has the right or authority to change the boundaries of a Presbytery without giving the Presbytery an opportunity to express its approval or disapproval.

"Your committee recommends as follows: However inexpedient the use of such autocratic authority may be, it is not forbidden, but authorized, in the powers of Synod, as defined in the Book of Church Order, paragraph 86, namely: 'To erect new Presbyteries, and to unite or divide those which were before erected.' This *power* of Synod is not circumscribed as it is with the Presbytery, which has 'power . . . to unite or divide churches at the request of the members thereof.' (Par. 76.) A Synod's power *should* be limited, and the Assembly would urge Synods not to exercise this power to this dangerous extent, save in extraordinary cases." (M. G. A. 1927, p. 51.)

CHAPTER XIX

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

390. **Highest court.** The General Assembly is the highest court, the court of last resort, the supreme court of the Presbyterian Church.

391. **Meetings.** The General Assembly has been meeting annually on the third Thursday in May. The first General Assembly was held in the United States in 1789, on the third Thursday in May, at 11:00 A. M., in the Second Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States was organized in Augusta, Georgia, December 4, 1861. There is no law governing the time of meeting of the General Assembly. The Assembly in 1923 adopted a standing rule making the time the third Thursday in May. In 1929, the Standing Rule was changed, so that the Assembly now meets on the fourth Thursday in May instead of the third Thursday.

392. **Called meeting.** "When any emergency shall require a meeting of the General Assembly earlier than the time to which it stands adjourned, the moderator shall issue a call for a special meeting at the request, or with the concurrence, of twenty-seven commissioners who had seats in the Assembly at its preceding meeting, of whom eighteen shall be ministers and seven ruling elders, representing at least twelve Presbyteries under the jurisdiction of at least five Synods. Should the moderator be for any reason unable to act, the stated clerk shall, under the same requirements, issue the call. The members of the special meeting shall be the commissioners elected to the preceding meeting of the Assembly, or their alternates. A Presbytery, however, shall have the right to elect a commissioner or alternate in the stead of one

who has died since the last meeting of the Assembly, or of one who has notified the moderator of the Presbytery of his inability to serve. Notice of the special meeting shall be sent not less than twenty days in advance to each commissioner and to the moderator of each Presbytery. In the notice, the purpose of the meeting is to be stated, and no other business is to be transacted." (B. Ch. O., par. 87.)

393. Membership and quorum. In 1911, the Assembly adopted the following as the basis of representation in the General Assembly: "Every Presbytery shall be entitled to send one minister and one ruling elder; but if the number of communicants in the churches and ministers on the roll, together, be over four thousand, it shall be entitled to send an additional minister and ruling elder; and in like proportion for every four thousand communicants and ministers." (B. Ch. O., par. 86.)

"Any eighteen of these commissioners, of whom one-half shall be ministers, and at least five shall be ruling elders, representing at least twelve Presbyteries under the jurisdiction of at least five Synods, being met on the day and at the place mentioned, shall be a quorum for the transaction of business." (B. Ch. O., par. 89.)

394. Length of term of commissioners. Commissioners are chosen for one year. There is nothing in the Book of Church Order preventing Presbyteries electing commissioners for two years. The General Assembly, in 1902 and 1903, made a deliverance saying that a Presbytery is under obligation to appoint the full number of commissioners. (A. D. 1922, pp. 128, 129; M. G. A. 1902, p. 254; 1903, p. 465; 1914, p. 25; 1928, p. 43.)

395. Alternate commissioner taking the place of the principal commissioner. "It is the judgment of this

Assembly that the substitution of the alternate for the principal, or vice versa, is competent whenever in the judgment of the court such a change is deemed necessary or proper, in every case the change being made a matter of record." (A. D. 1922, p. 130; M. G. A. 1899, p. 430.)

In 1901, such a change in commissioners was made, and the record is found on page 31, Minutes General Assembly.

396. Powers.

1. "To receive and issue all appeals, references and complaints regularly brought before it from the lower courts.

2. "To bear testimony against error in doctrine and immorality in practice, injuriously affecting the Church.

3. "To decide in all controversies respecting doctrine and discipline.

4. "To give its advice and instruction, in conformity with the Constitution, in all cases submitted to it.

5. "To review the records of the Synods.

6. "To take care that the lower courts observe the constitution.

7. "To redress whatever they may have done contrary to order.

8. "To concert measures for promoting the prosperity and enlargement of the Church.

9. "To erect new Synods.

10. "To institute and superintend the agencies necessary in the general work of evangelization.

11. "To appoint ministers to such labors as fall under its jurisdiction.

12. "To suppress schismatical contentions and disputations, according to the rules provided therefor.

13. "To receive under its jurisdiction, with the consent of three-fourths of the Presbyteries, other eccles-

iastical bodies whose organization is conformed to the doctrine and order of this Church.

14. "To authorize Synods and Presbyteries to exercise similar power in receiving bodies suited to become constituents of those courts, and lying within their geographical bounds, respectively.

15. "To superintend the affairs of the whole Church.

16. "To correspond with other churches.

17. "To unite with other ecclesiastical bodies whose organization is conformed to the doctrine and order of this Church, such union to be effected by a mode of procedure defined in paragraph 162, Book of Church Order.

18. "To recommend measures for the promotion of charity, truth, and holiness through all the churches under its care." (B. Ch. O., par. 90.)

397. **The business of the General Assembly.** The principal items of business of the General Assembly are:

1. To receive the annual reports of the executive and permanent committees. These reports which are presented in printed form are referred to standing committees, who make a thorough study of them and report to the Assembly, making certain recommendations, which are usually adopted.

2. To receive overtures, communications and papers, which are referred to standing committees.

3. To receive and issue appeals, references and complaints regularly brought before it from the inferior courts.

4. To hear official representatives from other bodies.

5. To hold popular meetings in the interest of the Assembly's causes.

6. To exchange greetings with other ecclesiastical bodies and adopt such actions as the Standing Committee of Foreign Relations may recommend.

398. The enacting power of the Assembly. There are two classes of questions concerning which the Assembly may exercise its enacting power.

1. Those questions involving a change in the Constitution of the Church, such as amendments to the Book of Church Order. "It lies within the discretion of the Assembly either to enact or decline to enact. The Assembly in 1906 (M. G. A., pp. 52, 53), in the exercise of its discretion, declined to enact the amendment touching commissions." (A. D. 1922, p. 132; M. G. A. 1909, p. 52.)

In 1925, the Assembly took the following action when it adopted the new Book of Church Order: "Inasmuch as it is possible that certain statements in paragraph 1 on 'Trustees' (see M. G. A. 1924, p. 137) may be found to be in conflict with civil law, the committee recommends that said paragraph be stricken out and not enacted by the Assembly." (M. G. A. 1925, p. 52.)

The statement in paragraph 163, Book of Church Order, that the "next Assembly shall take final action" (after action has been postponed for one year) does not mean that the Assembly must enact the amendment for which a majority of Presbyteries have given their advice and consent. It still "lies within the discretion of the Assembly either to enact or decline to enact." (M. G. A. 1909, p. 52.)

It seems clear also that when paragraph 163, Book of Church Order, says, "Shall take final action," the matter cannot be postponed another year.

2. "Those questions in regard to which the constitution of the Church vests in the Assembly alone the power to take final and authoritative action.

"As to this class of questions, your committee would recommend the following answer: One Assembly may refer questions of this class to a succeeding Assembly, but the succeeding Assembly cannot be shorn of power constitutionally lodged in the General Assembly alone by the act of a previous Assembly referring the question to the Presbyteries for action. The Presbyteries may properly express their opinion in such matters, and the expressed opinions of a majority of the Presbyteries would naturally have much weight with the Assembly, but the power to decide rests with the General Assembly alone." (A. D. 1922, p. 133; M. G. A. 1909, p. 52.)

399. Legalizing proceedings of Presbyteries and Synods held away from place appointed. The Assembly legalized the proceedings of a Presbytery held away from the place appointed. (A. D. 1922, pp. 103, 104; M. G. A. 1917, p. 68.) On two occasions previous to this, the same action was taken. On several occasions the Assembly legalized the meetings of Synods held out of place. From this it would seem that only the highest court, the General Assembly, can legalize meetings of Presbyteries held out of time and place. There is nothing in our records to show that the Synod rather than the Assembly is empowered to legalize the proceedings of a Presbytery held away from the place appointed.

400. Duties of chairmen of standing committees. The Standing Rules of the General Assembly make the following requirements of the chairmen of standing committees:

"No partial report from a standing committee, except from the Committees on Bills and Overtures and Foreign Relations, shall be received by the Assembly without the consent of the Assembly. All reports of committees shall be typewritten in seven copies by the Assembly's stenographers, and proof-read by the chairman of the committee reporting. The duties of the chairman of the committee shall not be completed until he has edited carefully his committee's report, after it is typewritten, for errors in phraseology and grammar, and shall have filed the required number of copies of the report with the stated clerk. The chairman of each committee shall also, after the Assembly shall have acted on the report presented by him, incorporate therein at the proper place each amendment made by the Assembly to the report.

"The report of a standing committee to the Assembly shall be as brief and concise as the recommendations of a committee will permit. The report shall only contain a brief preamble of the questions acted on by the committee and the conclusions and recommendations of the committee. Extracts and quotations from reports of an executive committee, a permanent committee, or an ad-interim committee, should be avoided, except when required to make the report intelligible. Overtures shall be answered by reference to the number of the overture and a brief statement of its substance." (Standing Rules 9, 10.)

401. Chairman standing near the desk of stated clerk. The chairmen of standing committees should stand near the desk of the stated clerk to avail themselves of any assistance which he may be able to render them while presenting their reports.

402. Appointments of Assembly usually for one year. The Assembly in 1916 ruled "that all appointments are ad-interim and expire at the next Assembly unless a longer term of office is provided for by a Standing Rule or explicit statement." (A. D. 1922, p. 137; M. G. A. 1916, p. 72.)

403. Privileges of the floor given to secretaries and clerks of the Assembly. Secretaries and clerks of the Assembly have the privilege of deliberating as members in certain cases. "A reference to the rule will show that 'The privileges of members on the floor' are not conferred by it on the above officers, but only the privilege of making statements and explanations touching trusts committed to their care. This the Assembly regards as both safe and convenient." (A. D. 1922, p. 133; M. G. A. 1869, p. 390; 1871, p. 18.)

The privileges of the floor may also be granted to all ex-moderators. (A. D. 1922, p. 132; M. G. A. 1917, p. 17.)

404. Executive secretaries and others elected by the Assembly. The Assembly has ruled "the nomination of secretaries and others may be made by the several executive committees. This does not take away from the Assembly the right to make other nominations if it so desire." (A. D. 1922, p. 137; M. G. A. 1913, p. 70-n.)

405. Form for adjournment. "The whole business of the Assembly being finished, and the vote taken for final adjournment, the moderator shall say from the chair: 'By virtue of the authority delegated to me by the Church, I do now declare that the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States is adjourned, to convene at................on the................day of................, A. D.' After which he shall pray and return thanks, and pronounce, or cause to be pronounced, on those present the apostolic benediction." (B. Ch. O., par. 91.)

406. Commission for commissioners. Presbyteries are required to furnish each commissioner to the General Assembly with a commission duly signed. The form of the commission is as follows:

"The Presbytery of............being met at.................. on the..........day of..............., doth hereby appoint A. B., minister (or ruling elder, as the case may be), and in the case of his absence, then C. D., minister (or ruling elder, as the case may be), to be a commissioner on behalf of this Presbytery to the next General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, to meet at................, on the..........day of................, A. D., or wherever and whenever the said Assembly may happen to sit; to consult, vote and determine on all things that may come before that body, according to the principles and constitution of this Church and the Word of God. And of his diligence herein he is to render an account at his return.

"Signed by order of the Presbytery:

"(C. D.), Clerk. (A. B.), Moderator."

(B. Ch. O., par. 88.)

The Stated Clerks of Presbyteries should secure from the Committee of Publication a supply of printed cards for Commissioners; white for ministers and blue for ruling elders.

407. **Commissioners' expenses.** "The commissioners shall be paid their traveling expenses entire, provided their Presbyteries have paid their apportionment in full. In case the Presbyteries have not paid their apportionment in full, their commissioners are to be paid their expenses in proportion as their Presbyteries have paid their apportionments." (A. D. 1922, p. 147; M. G. A. 1910, p. 48-f.) (See, also, par. 420.)

408. **Continued attendance of commissioners upon Assembly's sessions.** "To encourage the continued attendance of the commissioners upon the Assembly's sessions until the final adjournment thereof, the mileage committee is instructed to withhold the expense checks until the last day of the session, except in the case of commissioners excused for good and sufficient reasons by the committee on leave of absence." (A. D. 1922, p. 148; M. G. A. 1915, p. 80-g.)

409. **The mileage committee dispensed with by the Assembly.** In 1924, the mileage committee was dispensed with and the stated clerk directed to employ

an accountant, who, under his instructions, should make out the expense checks and place them in the hands of the commissioners. The date for giving the checks to commissioners is delayed as late as possible as is consistent with the local bank's arrangements for paying these checks.

410. **Presbyterial assessments paid by churches.** Church Sessions are instructed to have their church treasurers send their Presbyterial assessment to treasurers of Presbyteries before the first of April of each year in order that the Presbyterial treasurer may have sufficient funds with which to meet the Presbyterial assessment. Prompt attention to this will save embarrassment to the stated clerk and treasurer of the Assembly in the payment of commissioners' expenses. (M. G. A. 1923, p. 70-e.)

411. **Uniform ecclesiastical year.** The ecclesiastical year has been made uniform throughout the Church, beginning April 1st and closing March 31st. Repeated efforts to change the ecclesiastical year have failed.

412. **Keeping treasurers' books open.** The Assembly directed that treasurers of executive committees keep their books open five days after the last Sunday in March, and in no case to close them before March 31st. (A. D. 1922, p. 724; M. G. A. 1919, p. 69-i.)

413. **Publicity.** In 1921, the Generaly Assembly appointed an ad-interim committee on publicity. This committee reported to the Assembly of 1922, and their report was adopted. The recommendations of the committee are as follows:

"1. That the general publicity of the Church, including the reporting of the proceedings of the General Assembly, be assigned to the Assembly's Stewardship Committee.

"2. That all the executive committees and agencies of the Church be urged to recognize more fully the place and value of legitimate publicity and to use more adequately this means of making the work of the Church better known.

"3. That Synods and Presbyteries be urged to appoint a small committee on publicity at the opening of each meeting to decide what matters shall be given to the public press and to endeavor to have them presented in a sane and effective way.

"4. That all our churches be urged to recognize the importance of giving publicity to their activities and to seek the co-operation of local papers and other avenues of publicity, to the end that the truth concerning the scope, purpose and achievements of the Christian religion and of the Presbyterian Church in the extension of the Kingdom of God throughout the world may be better understood and rendered more impelling." (M. G. A. 1922, p. 196.)

414. **Printed minutes.** The General Assembly issues two volumes: 1. Reports, which includes the annual reports of Executive Committees, the Woman's Auxiliary, the Stewardship and Men's Work Committee and the Department of Country Church. 2. The Minutes of the General Assembly, consisting of the proceedings, the appendix and the statistical report of each church, arranged by Presbyteries. Copies of the volumes of Reports and Minutes are sent free to each minister and licentiate on the rolls of the Presbyteries. They are mailed to the latest postoffice address supplied to the stated clerk of the General Assembly. The Assembly does not guarantee delivery. The price of the volume of Reports is fifty cents, and the Minutes one dollar to all persons within our Church. To all others outside our bounds, the price of the volume of Reports is one dollar and the Minutes two dollars.

415. **Deliverances and General Assembly decisions.** Two forms of decisions:

1. The General Assembly sits as a deliberative body which is legislative.

2. The General Assembly frequently sits as a court, in the trial of judicial cases.

416. Nature and authority of its deliverances. 1. The deliverance that is of the highest authority is that of a decision in a judicial case, the case having come up by appeal or complaint from the lower court. The General Assembly sits as the supreme court of Jesus Christ, and its decision is final. It determines and concludes a particular case. (See also paragraph 418.)

The Assembly in 1879 made a deliverance stating that the deliverances of 1865, 1869 and 1877 on the subject of worldly amusements are not to be accepted and enforced as law by judicial process upon the following grounds:

"(1) That these deliverances do not require judicial prosecution expressly, and could not require it without violating the spirit of our law.

"(2) That none of these deliverances were made by the Assembly in a strictly judicial capacity, but were all deliverances in thesi, and therefore can be considered as only didactic, advisory and monitory.

"(3) That the Assembly has no power to issue orders to institute process except according to the provisions of the Rules of Discipline found in the Book of Church Order (revised 1925)."

(A. D. 1910, p. 120; M. G. A. 1879, p. 23.)

For additional information on this subject, the reader is referred to the action of the General Assembly in 1879, page 23.

The Assembly of 1880 was asked to repeal, or at least seriously modify, the deliverance of the 1879 Assembly in relation to worldly amusements, as declares that all deliverances of the General Assembly and by necessary implication of the other courts of the Church which are not made by them in a strictly judicial capacity, but are deliverances in thesi, can be considered as only didactic and advisory and monitory."

The Assembly declared:

"(1) Nothing is law to be enforced by judicial prosecution but that which is contained in the Word as interpreted in our Standards.

"(2) The judicial decisions of our courts differ from *in thesi* deliverances, in that the former determine and, when proceeding from our highest court, conclude a particular case; but both these kinds of decisions are alike interpretations of the Word by a church court, and both not only deserve high consideration, but both must be submitted to unless contrary to the constitution and the Word, as to which there is a right of private judgment belonging to every church court, and also to every individual church member."

(A. D. 1910, p. 122; M. G. A. 1880, p. 202.)

2. Force of logical inferences from deliverances of Church courts. "All just and necessary consequences from the law of the Church are a part of the same, in the logical sense of being implicitly contained therein. The authority of the law is, however, twofold: it binds all those who profess to live under it as a covenant by which they are united in one communion, so that there is no escape from its control except by renouncing its jurisdiction; and it binds because it has been accepted as a true expression of what is revealed in Holy Scriptures as infallible truth. The consequences deduced from it cannot, therefore, be equal in authority with the law itself, unless they be necessarily contained within it, as shown by their agreement also with the Divine Word." (A. D. 1922, p. 167; M. G. A. 1881, p. 390.)

417. The General Assembly as a court. The jurisdiction of the courts of the Church sitting in a judicial capacity is limited by the express provisions of the constitution.

418. **Force of in thesi deliverance.** A judicial sentence cannot be set aside by an in thesi deliverance. While it is competent for one General Assembly, under the rules provided by the constitution, to grant a new hearing to a case which has been judicially decided by a previous Assembly, a deliverance by the Assembly could not modify or set aside the judicial sentence. (A. D. 1922, pp. 166, 167; M. G. A. 1879, p. 57.) (Also see par. 416.)

419. **Audits.** The General Assembly requires that all the treasurers of executive committees, all boards of trustees, all treasurers, and all others handling any of the funds of the Assembly shall have audits made at the end of the ecclesiastical year and present them to the Assembly. These audits are placed in the hands of the Standing Committee on Finance, Budget, and Rules.

Standing Rule 6 (2) is as follows: "The audits of all executive and permanent committees, trustees and treasurer of the Assembly shall be submitted to this committee (Finance, Budget and Rules) for approval."

420. **Traveling expenses of commissioners.** The Assembly has defined what may be included in the expenses of commissioners as chargeable to it.

1. The lowest attainable railroad fare.
2. Through Pullman fare by most direct route.
3. Cost of meals en route not to exceed three dollars per day for minimum time required for trip.
4. Necessary expenses during attendance upon Assembly.
5. Such necessary hotel bills as may be incurred in transit.

Each commissioner is required to render an itemized statement of his traveling expenses for the round trip.

421. Reports of ad-interim and permanent committees to be filed with the stated clerk. The Standing Rule (number 15) requires that all reports of ad-interim and permanent committees must be in the hands of the stated clerk of the Assembly by April first in each year.

422. Expenses of chairmen of ad-interim committees. The expenses of the chaiman of an ad-interim committee in attending the Assembly shall be paid by the Assembly when the committee of which he is chairman vote that the report is of such importance as to require the attendance of the chairman and when the committee shall so notify the stated clerk. (Standing Rule 6 [3].)

423. Reports of ad-interim and permanent committees. If the chairman or representative of a permanent, ad-interim or special committee wishes to be heard in connection with the report, such privilege shall be limited to a statement not to exceed five minutes, and in no case shall a report which is in printed form be read in full. (Standing Rule 15 [6].)

424. Expenses of representatives to outside bodies or councils.

1. The expenses of two members of the Executive Committee of the Federal Council in attendance upon the annual meeting and one member of the administrative committee upon the monthly meetings of the executive and administrative committees of the council.

2. The expenses of one representative to the Conference on Faith and Order in the annual meeting of the Executive Cammittee. (Standing Rule 6 [1, 2].)

425. Blue book to be printed. The stated clerk shall print in the Blue Book the reports of all permanent committees, except those submitting printed reports, all ad-interim committees and reports of such outside bodies as make an anual report, and select committees. He shall also print the overtures, having previously classified and numbered them, for presentation to the Assembly. He shall also print a full and complete docket in the Blue Book, which shall be the docket for the Assembly each year. (Standing Rule 15 [2].)

426. Order of presentation by the stated clerk. The stated clerk shall list all communications and present them in an orderly manner, suggesting the proper reference, and, when necessary, suggesting the time for the consideration of each communication. (Standing Rule 15 [3].)

He shall present the overtures, giving the number and the substance of each overture and its reference, which numbering and order shall be preserved in the printed minutes. (Standing Rule 15 [4].)

In like manner, he shall list and present without reading all reports of permanent committees (except those presenting printed reports), ad-interim and special committees (all of which are printed in full in the Blue Book), which shall be referred to proper committees or disposed of immediately as the Assembly may elect. In case these reports are to be considered directly by the Assembly, the stated clerk shall suggest a time on the docket when each report shall be considered. (Standing Rule 15 [5.])

427. Deliverance against lobbying. "In response to the overture of the Presbytery of Montgomery, protesting against lobbying to influence legislation by organizations in which we as a church have representation, the Assembly replies that it hereby reaffirms its cordial belief in the spirituality of the Church and urges all who represent us in such organizations to use all their wisdom and prudence in securing observance of this principle. When such principle is violated they should make prompt protest and then report to the subsequent General Assembly full specification and details of such violations by the body or organization concerned." (M. G. A. 1925, p. 67.)

428. **Electioneering pamphlets disapproved.** "Pamphlets bearing upon questions pending before the Assembly having been put in circulation among its members, the Assembly expressed its disapproval of this method of attempting to influence its decisions as disrespectful to this body and an infringement upon its prerogatives." (A. D. 1922, p. 138; M. G. A. 1880, p. 212.)

429. **Original jurisdiction in judicial cases.** The General Assembly has no original jurisdiction in matters of discipline; but when a judicial case comes before the Assembly, by appeal or complaint, it has the power to declare the law in this particular case. This judicial interpretation of the law is the interpretation in connection with a given case. This decision becomes the law of the Church in cases similar to this given case. Decisions of this kind are not to be construed as *in thesi deliverances*, but are of binding authority. These decisions have been made after the matter has been discussed in two or more courts and after everything connected with it has been discussed freely, not only in the lower court but also in the Assembly.

430. **Without power to organize or dissolve a Presbytery.** The General Assembly has no constitutional power to establish or dissolve Presbyteries. (See "Powers of Synod.") (A. D. 1922, p. 100; M. G. A. 1876, p. 232.)

431. **Prayer for the General Assembly.** "*Whereas*, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States fully recognizes the efficacy of the prayers of God's people, and the necessity of divine guidance in its own deliberations; therefore:

Resolved, First, That the General Assembly recommend to all the churches under its care to offer special prayer during the devotions of the Sabbath preceding the meeting of the General Assembly in each year, that God would of His great mercy so give the General Assembly the wisdom that cometh from above, and so direct all its plans, discussions and decisions as to promote His own glory and to advance the Kingdom of Jesus on earth.

Resolved, Second, That the above preamble and resolution be printed annually in the Appendix to the Minutes of the Assembly." (A. D. 1922, p. 141; M. G. A. 1863, p. 133.)

CHAPTER XX

CHURCH CLERKS

432. Origin of name. Each court has a secretary or clerk who keeps the records of the meetings of the court. The "Clerk of Session" is the name given this officer of the Session. In all the other courts he is called the "Stated Clerk." Dr. J. Aspinwall Hodge gives, in his book, "What is Presbyterian Law?" the following history of the origin of the name "Stated Clerk": "The Clerk is called the Stated Clerk to distinguish him from those appointed to help him. At first, the Clerk was able to perform the whole duty required, but after the union of the two Synods of New York and Philadelphia his work so increased that in 1763 he was granted an assistant. They were called the Clerk and his Assistant. At the organization of the Assembly in 1789 the title 'Stated Clerk' appears in describing the clerk of that body, and the Clerk of Presbytery, of Synod and of the General Assembly have since been called the Stated Clerk of those judicatories." (Hodge, "What is Presbyterian Law?" p. 543.)

CLERK OF SESSION

433. Qualifications and duties. The Clerk of Session is elected by the Session. In selecting an elder for this responsible office, great care should be taken that he should have special qualifications for the office, such as writing a legible hand, having some clerical ability and experience, and having a deep interest in the work of the Church. Usually, a man who has had experience in some business organization can be secured. His training in the business world should be a help to him in the work of the Church. He should be at every meeting of the Session to make full notes of the proceedings and record them later in the records of the Session. With regard to those present at each meeting, the record should give the names of all present, including the initials. It is important that the record be full and complete. The minutes will be read by future generations.

434. **Register of members.** The Session should have a register in which the clerk of Session shall enter:

1. The names of all members received, and whether they were on profession or certificate.
2. The fact of baptism being administered to persons received on profession.
3. The names of baptized children received with parents.
4. The names of members dismissed and to what church.
5. The names of members who have died.
6. The list of non-resident members.
7. The list of retired members.

435. **Issue letters.** The clerk of Session should issue all letters of dismission promptly and, when requested, mail them to the proper party or parties.

436. **Judicial cases.**

1. The clerk of Session should sign and issue all notices, when ordered by the Session.
2. He should keep on file all letters, papers and other documents which may be presented in a judicial case.
3. In case of appeal or complaint, he should make full copies of all papers and documents necessary for the superior court to try the case in an intelligent manner.

437. **Official records.** Copies of the records signed by the clerk of Session become official. In all cases,

where there is judicial procedure, the clerk of Session's signature is necessary to make the record official.

438. Session minute book. It is advisable to use a minute book uniform in size and shape. The Executive Committee of Publication publishes just such a minute book in several sizes.

439. Separate roll book. When the church has a large number of members it is advisable to use a separate book for the roll of members. Such a book, properly ruled, is prepared by the Executive Committee of Publication, Richmond, Virginia, or Texarkana, Texas.

440. How to keep the minutes.

1. The clerk of Session should make a pencil copy while the Session is holding the meeting. We strongly advise against using scraps of paper or the back of an envelope. These may easily be lost or mislaid. Use only regular size paper. In a large Session with many meetings, it is suggested that a blank book of regulation size be used, and all minutes kept until the written minutes have been approved.
2. He should transcribe the minutes into the minute book in good ink (ink that will not fade) in a clear, legible hand.
3. He should avoid all erasures and blots, and keep the page as clean as possible.
4. He should study the forms for minutes given in this book in paragraph 315.
5. He should keep the Session book where it will be safe and will not be liable to be destroyed by fire.

441. Loose-leaf minute book. If it is desired to have the minutes typewritten, then a loose-leaf minute book should be used. It should correspond in size with the usual minute books.

442. Reports of Sessions to Presbytery. The report of every church, no matter how small, is important. Hundreds of small churches make no report. They do not fill out and return a single blank sent them by the stated clerk of Presbytery. We wish to emphasize the importance of every church's making some kind of report. If nothing else but returning the blanks is done, this shows the stated clerk that there is some one who did receive the blanks.

Every clerk of Session or pastor of the church will receive some time in March of each year a set of blanks from the stated clerk of the Presbytery. Along with these blanks will be sent a statement of the amount of dues which the church should pay to the treasurer of the Presbytery. Care should be taken that these blanks are not lost or mislaid. The stated clerk may or may not have extra copies. The Session should not wait until after the last Sunday in March to begin preparation for making the reports. The treasurers of all the departments of the church should have their books ready to balance by the last Sunday in March. Immediately after the last Sunday in March the reports for that Sunday should be entered.

For instructions how to fill out the Session's Statistical Blank, see my Ready Reference Manual, pages 13-14, 1929 ed. These instructions are found on the back of the blank.

443. Notice to treasurers. The clerk of the Session or the pastor should give notice to the treasurers at least ten days before the close of the ecclesiastical year, requesting that the reports of all departments be ready by the first of April.

444. Blank work sheets. In the larger churches, a pencil form of the statistical, Sabbath school and church society blanks should be made and placed in the hands of those who are to make the report for each department. In fact, a number of pencil forms is of value. A trial sheet blank is printed by the Presbyterian Committee of Publication, Richmond, Virginia.

STATED CLERK OF PRESBYTERY

445. General statement. The stated clerk of Presbytery is usually a minister who is willing to perform the duties of the office because of the love and interest he has for the work. The small salary does not compensate for the work performed. It should be materially increased. The office requires a man who has some clerical ability and fitness for the work.

446. Tenure of office of stated clerks. Stated clerks are usually elected for a term of three or four years, usually three years, as is the case with all officers of the Assembly. This is true also of the permanent clerk.

447. Duty to give full instruction to Sessions. When the blanks are sent out to the churches, a letter should be written giving full instructions to the clerks of Sessions and others who receive the blanks, telling them when they are to be returned. The stated clerk should insist on having the blanks filled out and returned to him just as soon after the first of April as possible. He should insist, further, that every church, no matter how small, return the blanks sent, with all the information it is possible for it to give. He should insist, further, that pastors and clerks do not wait until the meeting of Presbytery to bring these reports. When a sufficient number have come in from the churches, he should begin to transfer them to the Presbyterial blanks for the General Assembly. If the Sessions will act promptly and heed the suggestions of the stated clerk, he can have most of this work done before he goes to Presbytery and be able to read a completed report to Presbytery. The entire statistical report should be read to Presbytery and corrections should be made before it is finally adopted. When a church fails to return the blanks and there is no way of securing information from the church, the stated clerk should fill in the number of elders, deacons and members from the last report from the church. It is often the case that there are ministers on the floor of Presbytery who can give full information concerning almost every church that fails to make a report.

448. **Reporting ministers on roll.** All ministers on roll, including those dismissed at the spring meeting of Presbytery should be reported to the General Assembly. Those dismissed should be marked *in transitu* and the new postoffice should be given. The stated clerk of the Assembly should be notified of these facts and changes.

449. **Instructions by Assembly.** Stated clerks of Presbyteries are instructed by the Assembly not to send up to it different overtures or papers on the same sheet of paper. (See also paragraph 354.) (A. D. 1922, p. 109; M. G. A. 1895, p. 389.)

450. **Duties defined.** "It is the duty of the clerk, besides recording the transactions, to preserve the records carefully, and to grant extracts from them whenever properly required. Such extracts, under the hand of the clerk, shall be evidence to any ecclesiastical court, and to every part of the Church." (B. Ch. O., par. 54.)

451. **Keeping the records.** It is the duty of the stated clerk to keep records of all the proceedings of the Presbytery, and either record them in a record book or to have them printed in pamphlet form. He is the custodian of all the papers and records of the Presbytery. Care should be taken that they are not lost or mislaid. During the year, the stated clerk receives

many communications and papers which are intended for Presbytery. These he should carefully preserve and present to the next stated meeting. At all times, he is the official representative of the Presbytery. (B. Ch. O., par. 54.)

452. **Equipment of the stated clerk.** The Presbytery should purchase for the use of the stated clerk the following equipment:

1. *A record case.* This case should be made of leather. The size should be about 16 inches long, 14 inches deep or high, and 8 inches wide. It should be large enough to hold all the records, papers and books used by the stated clerk. Ordinarily, he will use loose-leaf books 8½ inches by 11 inches.
2. *A number of loose-leaf books* in which to keep the records and papers.
3. *A punch* with which to punch papers so they can be filed in the loose-leaf books.
4. *A copy of Alexander's Digest,* Revised Edition 1922, and a copy of "Presbyterian Law and Procedure," by Rev. J. D. Leslie, D. D., stated clerk, should be in the hands of every stated clerk, which books should be brought to the meetings of the Presbytery.
5. *A typewriter.* The stated clerk should not be compelled to use his meager salary to purchase a typewriter.

453. **Compensation of the stated clerk.** It is not just to the stated clerk to give him a meager salary and then require him to equip his own office. The experience of the writer has been that the churches will gladly pay the expenses of such equipment and increased salary of the office for the sake of efficiency. When a minister gives gladly and willingly of his time to serve the Presbytery in an official capacity, he should have everything necessary for his convenience and for making his work effective.

454. Correspondence. Concerning the matter of correspondence, it is important that every letter requiring an answer should be answered promptly. Every official paper or communication to Presbytery should be acknowledged. After years of service, the writer is convinced that every letter should be answered, even though some of them do not relate directly to the work of the Presbytery. Some stated clerks hesitate on account of the expense in postage, etc. The Presbytery should direct the stated clerk to pay out of the funds of the Presbytery all expenses of stationery and postage.

The stated clerk should send to the stated clerk of the General Assembly, on postal cards furnished by the latter, notices of all ministers received and dismissed. This information should be sent immediately, as it is used to supply the executive committees of the Assembly and the stewardship committee, with a monthly report of changes of addresses, thus keeping their mailing lists up to date.

455. Reports to the General Assembly. 1. *Their preparation.* The preparation of the reports of the Presbytery to the General Assembly in the spring is one of the most important duties of the stated clerk. This preparation consists in securing, first of all, from the Executive Committee of Publication, Richmond, Virginia, or Texarkana, Texas, the latest forms of blanks. Since the General Assembly often makes some slight change, only blanks with such changes should be used. It is a good idea to order just enough for one year, allowing a few extras for churches which may lose the set sent them.

It is important that Stated Clerks of Presbyteries read carefully "Instructions to Stated Clerks" in the appendix to the Minutes of the Assembly. (M. G. A. 1929, p. 157-158.)

2. *Sending out the blanks.* When the stated clerk sends out the blanks about March first he should see that every church secures a full set. He will have to decide to whom these blanks should be sent. In the case of the church with a pastor, it is usually best to send them to the pastor. In case of vacant churches, the clerk of Session is the proper person to whom he should send them. If the stated clerk is the treasurer of the Presbytery, he should also send a bill for Presbyterial dues.

3. *Advance preparation.* The stated clerk should prepare in advance of the spring meeting of Presbytery an alphabetical list of ministers, licentiates and candidates; also a complete list of churches with their postoffices. These lists should be accurate. The stated clerk of the General Assembly will send each stated clerk of Presbytery a blank form on which he is requested to enter the list of ministers up to and including the spring meeting of Presbytery. This list is very important to the stated clerk of the Assembly and should be sent very promptly. The blank should be filled out just as it stands, using the abbreviations, etc., as suggested by the papers sent to the stated clerks.

456. Permanent clerk. The Presbyteries and the Synods usually elect a permanent clerk in addition to the stated clerk. The term of office is usually for a period of three years. The duties of this office are to prepare the minutes of the court, read them each morning, and when they have been adopted, place them, in finished form, into the hands of the stated clerk. Although there is always a temporary clerk elected to keep the minutes, the permanent clerk should not depend altogether upon these minutes. He should sit by the temporary clerk and keep the minutes also. After each session of the court, they should check over the minutes together to see that nothing is omitted, and that the minutes are correct. He should then, with these corrected minutes, write out in full the minutes to be presented to the court for adoption. If it is possible, the typewriter should be used and the minutes made in duplicate. This is more important, however, in Synod than in the Presbytery, as the minutes there are much longer.

STATED CLERK OF SYNOD

457. **Qualifications.** The qualifications for the stated clerk of Synod are the same as those for the stated clerk of Presbytery. His duties differ from those in the Presbytery only as the business of Synod differs from that of the Presbytery. The term of office for the stated clerk is usually three years.

458. **Also treasurer.** The stated clerk is ex officio treasurer of Synod and receives and disburses all funds placed in his hands, making a full report thereof to Synod.

459. **Permanent clerk.** Nearly all the Synods now have permanent clerks, whose term of office is the same as that of the stated clerk. The duties of the permanent clerk are similar to those of the permanent clerk of Presbytery.

STATED CLERK OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

460. **Qualifications.** The office of stated clerk of the General Assembly is one of great responsibility. Long and intimate experience with the work of all the courts of the church is a valuable preparation for the office.

461. **Official representative.** The stated clerk of the General Assembly is the official representative of that body. "He shall be elected for a term of three years, and shall perform all the duties required of him by the

Book of Church Order and by the Standing Rules of the Assembly, and such other duties as may be imposed upon him by the Assembly." (See Standing Rule No. 11, M. G. A. 1929, p. 154.) All communications for the Assembly should be sent to him. He should issue all official documents, notices and matters of importance to the Church. His office should be made a clearing house for the whole church, also a bureau of information. The stated clerk should be the one official of the Church to whom ministers, ruling elders, deacons and other members may write for information on any ecclesiastical matter on which they desire information.

462. Duties in preparation for the meeting of the General Assembly.

1. To revise the Sessional and the Presbyterial blanks. The Stated Clerk and the Executive Secretary of Religious Education and Publication must confer and make such changes as are ordered by the Assembly. Copy for these changes must be ready by January 1.
2. To secure reduced rates for the commissioners, which requires correspondence with railroad officials; to issue circular information to each commissioner and to the Church papers as to rates.
3. To prepare the blank forms for the summary reports, which are made by the transfer of the totals of the Presbyterial reports to them.
4. To correct and bring up to date the card index on which is kept the alphabetical list of ministers and licentiates. From this list a typewritten copy must be made for the minutes.
5. To receive from the stated clerks the Presbyterial reports to the Assembly, the overtures, the Presbyterial dues, and all other communications intended for the Assembly, and receipt for same.

6. To prepare copy for the Blue Book and the Manual.

7. To verify the names, initials of all ministers and licentiates, the spelling of the names of churches and their postoffices; to verify the additions of all columns and to correct errors if there be any.

8. To prepare the docket for the Assembly, together with blank forms on which to transfer the sections to nominate to the moderator the members of the standing committees.

463. Duties during the sessions of the General Assembly.

1. To see that all arrangements for the meeting of the Assembly have been made in accordance with suggestions made by the stated clerk to the pastor and church entertaining the Assembly.

2. To enroll the commissioners.

3. To give the moderator all assistance needed in the preparation of the typewritten copy of the standing committees.

4. To present the business in his hands to the Assembly in the order in which it is found on the docket, and in accordance with the Standing Rules of the Assembly.

5. To arrange for the keeping of the minutes of the daily sessions by trained assistants.

6. To give close attention to the presentation of all reports by standing committees and see that the chairmen make all changes and corrections in these reports in accordance with the Standing Rules.

7. To keep the minutes of the daily sessions and read them each morning to the General Assembly for approval. In 1922 the Assembly abolished the office of permanent clerk and placed the duties of that officer upon the stated clerk. The stated clerk should employ the best possible clerical assistance. He should have

general oversight of the clerical force and offer suggestions to them as occasion demands.

In 1926, the Assembly granted the Stated Clerk permission to secure an assistant, to render aid both clerically and executively in the office of Stated Clerk. The assistant acts as Minute Clerk at the General Assembly and prepares the minutes for publication.

464. Duties after the General Assembly has adjourned.

1. To proof-read the minutes and make such changes as are authorized by the Standing Rule before placing them in the hands of the printer.
2. To proof-read the printed minutes, the appendix, the statistical tables, and all the preliminary and supplemental pages of the minutes.
3. To prepare mailing labels, and see that a copy is mailed to each minister and licentiate.
4. To notify officially every person whom the Assembly has appointed on a committee or to a service for the Assembly.
5. To make certified copies of the action of the Assembly on any matter for which a request is made.

465. General duties between meetings of the Assembly.

1. To notify officially the inferior courts of any action of the Assembly requiring their attention.
2. To answer all correspondence.
3. To give copies of the decisions of the Assembly to those who request them.
4. To make a thorough and comprehensive study of the laws of the Church, the decisions of the Assembly, and to be able to give all needed information to those requesting it.
5. To receive official notices during the year from the stated clerks of changes of Presbytery and post-offices of all ministers and to make a monthly report

of such changes to the executive and other committees requiring a correct mailing list.

466. Treasurer of the Assembly. The Stated Clerk is the treasurer of the Assembly. He should send a statement of the amount of dues each Presbytery should pay. This amount should be calculated upon the amount per capita ordered by the Assembly. The treasurer should receipt for the dues, pay all expenses of the Assembly as directed by that body, and make a full statement to the Assembly each year.

467. Official minutes. "The official minutes of a court are the original minutes prepared by the temporary clerk or the assistant to the Stated Clerk, adopted by the court and signed by the Stated Clerk. If the Stated Clerk, before signing the original minutes, discovers that the copy of these original minutes prepared by the temporary or assistant clerk in typewritten form for use of the Stated Clerk, in printing the minutes, is incorrect by reason of any clerical oversight or typographical error, he shall be authorized to make such corrections as shall make the typewritten or written copy correspond in all respects with the original minutes or notes from which such typewritten or written form was prepared. Further, if it be discovered that in the printed copy of the minutes there are certain typographical errors which make the printed minutes of the court vary from the original minutes adopted by the court and signed by the Stated Clerk, the Stated Clerk shall give official notice through the press or through the court concerned of the typographical errors, which notice shall be sufficient authority for those possessing copies of the printed minutes to make the printed copy correspond with the original minutes." (Standing Rule 13.) (M. G. A. 1929, p. 154.)

468. The official record. "The minutes of a church court become its official record as soon as they are approved by that court, and the signature of its stated clerk is the evidence that they have thus been approved." (A. D. 1922, p. 168; M. G. A. 1890, p. 46.)

469. Correcting records. "Any errors subsequently discovered by the court in its approved records may be corrected at its subsequent meeting, and the correction appearing only in the minutes of that meeting." (A. D. 1922, p. 168; M. G. A. 1890, p. 46.) The stated clerk may not correct the minute by entering an explanatory note in the margin of the minute or by striking out the line or word or paragraph.

CHAPTER XXI

DOCKETS

470. Session docket. The Session should have a fixed order for transacting its business. The pastor and clerk of Session should prepare a docket covering the items of business usually transacted by the Session. The size of the church Session and the amount of business transacted at a stated meeting should determine how far into detail the Session should go in the preparation of its docket.

The following suggested form is submitted as a guide. Sessions can modify to suit their specific needs.

1. Call to order.
2. Open with prayer.
3. Calling roll or recording members present.
4. Reading minutes of last session.
5. Receiving new members.
6. Reports of permanent committees.
7. Reports of select committees.
8. Dismissing members.
9. Report of pastor.
10. Report of treasurer of board of deacons.
11. Election of representatives to Presbytery and Synod (spring and fall).
12. Unfinished business.
13. Miscellaneous business (general discussion).
14. Adjournment.
15. Closing with prayer.

471. Called meetings. When the Session is called to attend to any special business, the order in the docket may be dispensed with and the business transacted at once.

472. Presbytery's docket. Every Presbytery should have a docket for the transacting of its business in an orderly manner. The docket for the spring meeting is the more important and differs very much from the docket of the fall meeting. The docket given is that of the spring Presbytery. This docket is flexible and may be changed to suit the needs of the individual Presbytery.

1. Opening sermon by retiring moderator.
2. Prayer.
3. Roll call by stated clerk.
4. Election of moderator and clerks (usually temporary and reading clerks).
5. Fixing hours for daily sessions.
6. Announcements by pastor as to special orders and arrangements.
7. Reading minutes. (Omit if printed and refer to a committee.)
8. Appointment of standing committee.
    - (a) Bills and overtures.
    - (b) Judicial.
    - (c) Finance.
    - (d) Revision of permanent and examining committees.
    - (e) Records of Sessions.
    - (f) Minutes of Presbytery.
    - (g) Minutes of Synod (printed minutes).
    - (h) Leave of absence.
    - (i) Preacher and subject of next Presbyterial sermon.
    - (j) Vote of thanks.
9. Communications presented and referred.
10. Records of Sessions referred.
11. Report of treasurer.
12. Reports of permanent committees:
    - (a) Foreign missions.
    - (b) Home missions.

      and all other permanent committees.

      (These committees are sometimes called executive committees.)

13. Presbyterial communion.
14. Election of commissioners to General Assembly.
15. Reports of standing committees. (See list above.)
16. Selection of time and place of next meeting.
17. Presbyterial sermon.
18. Reading minutes.
19. Adjournment.
20. Closing with singing, prayer and benediction.

473. **Order of business.** The moderator should follow the morning call provided for in Rule of Parliamentary Order, Number 22, which is as follows:

ORDER OF BUSINESS

After the reading of the minutes of the preceding day, the following order of business shall be observed:

First. The receiving of—

(a) Communications addressed to the body;
(b) Reports of standing committees;
(c) Reports of select committees;
(d) Resolutions.

Each of which papers may, by unanimous consent, be taken up immediately on presentation, but if objection be made it shall be docketed.

Second. The unfinished business in which the court was engaged at the last preceding adjournment, in preference to orders of the day; but such unfinished business may, on motion, without debate, be laid on the table, to proceed with the special order.

Third. As soon as the special order and the unfinished business are disposed of, the business on the docket will be called; but motions to elect officers, to appoint committees and to enroll members shall always be in order, unless a member is speaking or the court is voting.

474. **Synod's docket.** The docket for the Synod varies somewhat from the Presbytery and varies in the

Synods. The following general docket may be used as the basis for preparing the docket best suited to the needs of each Synod.

1. Sermon by retiring moderator.
2. Prayer.
3. Report of stated clerk on enrollment.
4. Election of moderator and clerks (usually temporary and reading clerks).
5. Hours of sessions fixed.
6. Report of pastor on special orders and hours, including communion.
7. Appointment of standing committees by moderator.
    - (a) Devotional.
    - (b) Bills and overtures.
    - (c) Judicial.
    - (d) Audits.
    - (e) Minutes General Assembly.
    - (f) Printed minutes Synod.
    - (g) Minutes of Presbyteries.
    - (h) Revision of permanent committees.
    - (i) Leave of absence.
    - (j) Thanks.
8. Communications.
9. Reports of trustees, educational institutions, orphans' homes, etc.
10. Report of treasurer.
11. Report of permanent committee:
    - (a) Foreign missions.
    - (b) Home missions—Assembly and Synod and all other permanent committees.
12. Reports of ad-interim or other special committees.
13. Fixing hours for considering reports of permanent and other committees.
14. Selecting place of next meeting. (Time usually fixed by standing rule.)

15. Election of trustees. (Ballot when required by state law.)
16. Reports of standing committees.
17. Memorials of deceased ministers.
18. Reports of select committees appointed at this Synod.
19. Thanks.
20. Reading minutes.
21. Adjournment.
22. Closing with singing, prayer and benediction.

475. Order of business. The moderator should follow the morning call provided for in Rule of Parliamentary Order, number 22. (See rule under docket for Presbytery, par. 473.)

CHAPTER XXII

RULES OF PARLIAMENTARY ORDER

476. Rules of Parliamentary Order with explanations. The parliamentary rules were adopted by our General Assembly in 1866. The rules in force before the organization of our Assembly were changed by the addition of a few rules and a classification of them under distinct heads. In this way, the moderator and the members of any court may find at a glance any rule sought for. Simple though these rules are, they have a great historic origin. While they are elementary, they are connected with a compact system and beautiful structure. They are the work of many ages which has been reduced to a logical arrangement and condensed into simple formulas. "The principal writers on parliamentary law, from Hatsel in England to Cushing in America, hold that the system has been condensed and reduced by amendments and alterations until it has reached a degree of systematic arrangement which could hardly be surpassed, if the thing were even desirable." (Rev. R. K. Smoot, D. D., Parliamentary Principles.) No effort is made to give an exposition of these rules. We bring together only such explanations as are important.

Smith's Diagram and Parliamentary Rules is used in this volume by the authority of the publishers, and is found as an insert on the inside of the back cover.

477. Rules of parliamentary order.*

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*These rules were adopted by the General Assembly of 1866 for its own guidance. As there has been no subsequent action, as several of the lower courts have also adopted them, and as it is important for our judicatories and officers to have some manual on this subject of convenient access, these rules are here published; but, of course, form no part of the constitution of the church.

Of Opening the Sessions

1. The moderator shall take the chair precisely at the hour to which the court stands adjourned; shall immediately call the members to order; and on the appearance of a quorum, the session shall be opened with prayer.

2. If a quorum be assembled at the hour appointed, and the moderator be absent, the last moderator, or oldest minister present, shall take the chair without delay.

3. If a quorum be not assembled at the hour appointed, any two members shall be competent to adjourn from time to time, that an opportunity may be given for a quorum to assemble.

4. After calling the roll, and marking the absentees, the minutes of the last sitting shall be read and, if requisite, corrected.

Of the Moderator

5. It shall be the duty of the moderator to preserve order, and to conduct all business before the court to a speedy and proper result.

6. He is to propose to the court every subject of deliberation that comes before it.

7. He may propose what appears to him the most regular and direct way of bringing any business to issue.

8. He shall always announce the names of members rising to speak, prevent them from interrupting each other, and require them, in speaking, always to address the chair.

9. He shall prevent a speaker from deviating from the subject, and from using personal reflections.

10. He shall silence those who refuse to observe order.

11. He shall prevent members leaving the court without his permission.

12. He shall, when the deliberations are ended, put the question, and call the vote.

13. In all questions he shall give a clear and concise statement of the object of the vote, and the vote being taken, he shall declare how the question is decided.

14. He shall carefully keep notes of the orders of the day, and call them up at the times appointed.

15. He may speak to points of order in preference to other members, rising from his seat for that purpose, and shall decide questions of order subject to an appeal to the court, without debate, by any two members.

16. If any member consider himself aggrieved by a decision of the moderator, it shall be his privilege to appeal to the court, and the question on such appeal shall be taken without debate.

17. It is his duty to appoint all committees except in those cases in which the court shall decide otherwise.

18. When a vote is taken by ballot, or by yeas and nays, he shall vote with the other members; in other cases, when the court is equally divided, he shall possess the casting vote. If he be not willing to decide, he shall put the question a second time, and if the court be again equally divided, and he decline to give his vote, the question shall be lost.

19. He may call any member to the chair to preside temporarily.

Of the Clerk

20. As soon as possible after the commencement of the first session of every court, the clerk shall form a complete roll of the members present, and put the same into the hands of the moderator; and whenever any additional members take their seats he shall add their names in their proper places to the said roll.

21. He shall immediately file all papers in the order in which they have been read, with proper indorsements, and keep them in perfect order.

Of the Order of Business

22. After the reading of the minutes of the preceding day, the following order of business shall be observed:

First. The receiving of—
- (a) Communications addressed to the body;
- (b) Reports of standing committees;
- (c) Reports of select committees;
- (d) Resolutions.

Each of which papers may, by unanimous consent, be taken up immediately on presentation; but if objection be made, it shall be docketed.

Second. The unfinished business in which the court was engaged at the last preceding adjournment, in preference to orders of the day; but such unfinished business may, on motion, without debate, be laid on the table, to proceed with the special order.

Third. As soon as the special order and the unfinished business are disposed of, the business on the docket will be called; but motions to elect officers, to appoint committees, and to enroll members shall always be in order, unless a member is speaking or the court is voting.

Of Motions

23. A motion must be seconded, and afterward repeated by the moderator, or read aloud, before it is debated; but this shall be no bar to explanation of the object of any motion by the mover, provided he does not exceed five minutes; and every motion shall be reduced to writing if the moderator or any member require it.

24. The mover of a resolution is entitled to the floor if he so desire, after the moderator has stated the question.

Of Withdrawal of Motions

25. Any member who shall have made a motion shall have liberty to withdraw it, with the consent of his second, before any debate has taken place thereon, but not afterward, without leave of the court.

Of Limitations of Debate

26. Motions to lay on the table, to docket, to take up business, and to adjourn, and the call for the question, shall be put without debate. On questions of order, postponement or commitment, no member shall speak more than once. On all other questions each member may speak twice, but not oftener, without express leave of the court.

Of Privileged Questions

27. When a question is under debate, no motion shall be received unless to adjourn, to docket, to lay on the table, to amend, to postpone indefinitely, to postpone to a day certain, or to commit; which several motions shall have precedence in the order in which they are herein arranged; and the motion for adjournment shall always be in order.

Of "the Question"

28. When any member shall call for "*the question,*" the moderator shall, without debate, put the vote, "Is the court ready for the question?" If the call be seconded by a majority of the members present the vote shall immediately be taken on the pending question, whatever it may be, without further debate.

Of Division of the Question

29. If a motion under debate contains several parts, any two members may have it divided, and a question taken on each part.

Of Amendments

30. An amendment may be moved on any question, as also an amendment to the amendment, which shall be decided before the original proposition; but two distinct amendments to the pending question shall not be entertained at the same time, whether moved as substitutes for the whole matter or as changing any part thereof.

31. One proposition may be substituted for another when the substitute covers the whole matter of the original, and this shall be done by moving to strike out the original and to insert the substitute.

Of Reconsideration

32. A question shall not be reconsidered at the same sessions of the court at which it has been decided, unless by the consent of a majority of the members who were present at the decision, and unless the motion to reconsider be made by a person who voted with the majority.

33. A subject which has been indefinitely postponed shall not be again called up during the same sessions of the court, unless by the consent of three-fourths of the members who were present at the decision.

Of Speakers

34. If more than one member rise to speak at the same time, the member who is most distant from the moderator's chair shall speak first.

35. Every member, when speaking, shall address himself to the moderator, and shall treat his fellow-

members, and especially the moderator, with decorum and respect.

Of Interruptions

36. No speaker shall be interrupted, unless he be out of order, or for the purpose of correcting mistakes or misrepresentations.

Of Voting

37. Members shall not decline voting unless excused by the court.

38. When various motions are made with respect to the filling of blanks with particular numbers or times, the question shall always be first taken on the highest number and the longest time.

39. When the moderator has commenced taking the vote, no further debate or remark shall be admitted, unless there has evidently been a mistake, in which case the mistake shall be rectified, and the moderator shall recommence taking the vote.

40. The yeas and nays on any question shall not be recorded unless it be required by one-third of the members present; and every member shall vote "yea" or "nay," unless excused by the court. In a judicial case, members thus excused shall not be allowed a vote in any of the subsequent proceedings relating thereto.

41. In all elections it shall require a majority of the votes cast to elect.

Of Committees

42. The person first named on any committee shall be considered as the chairman thereof, whose duty it shall be to convene the committee and preside therein; and in case of his absence or inability to act, the second named member shall take his place and perform his duties.

Of Private Sessions

43. All courts have a right to sit in private on business which, in their judgment, ought not to be matter of public speculation.

Of the Committee of the Whole

44. Every court has a right to resolve itself into a committee of the whole, or to hold what are commonly called *interlocutory meetings*, in which members may freely converse together without the formalities necessary in their ordinary proceedings. In all such cases, the moderator shall name the member who is to preside as chairman. If the committee be unable to agree, a motion may be made that the committee rise, and upon the adoption of such motion the moderator shall resume the chair, and the chairman of the committee shall report what has been done, and ask that the committee be discharged, which being allowed, the matter shall be dropped. If the committee shall agree upon the report to be made, or have made progress in the same without coming to a conclusion, the committee may rise, report what has been done, and if the case require, may ask leave to sit again or the committee of the whole may be dissolved, and the question considered by the court in the usual order of business.

Of Decorum

45. Without express permission, no member of a court, while business is going on, shall engage in private conversation; nor shall members address one another, nor any person present but through the moderator.

46. When more than three members of the court shall be standing at the same time the moderator shall require all to take their seats, the person only excepted who may be speaking.

47. If any member act in any respect in a disorderly manner, it shall be the privilege of any member, and the duty of the moderator, to call him to order.

48. No member shall retire from any court without the leave of the moderator, nor withdraw from it to return home without the consent of the court.

Of Cases Unprovided for

49. All cases that may arise, not provided for in the foregoing rules, shall be governed by the general principles of parliamentary law.

Of Closing the Sessions

50. The moderator of every court, above the church session, in finally closing its sessions, in addition to prayer, may cause to be sung an appropriate psalm or hymn, and shall pronounce the apostolic benediction.

478. **Rules of Parliamentary Order.** The following epitome of some of the rules of parliamentary order, found on pages 73-76 of the first edition of the Digest, may be found useful. The figures refer to the number of the rule.

One aggrieved member can take an appeal from decision of moderator. (16.)

One member can call for question, compelling moderator to ask: Shall the question be now put? (28.)

One member can send to docket a report before consideration. (22 1 d.)

Two members can take an appeal from a decision on a point of order. (15.)

Two members may have a question divided. (29.)

One-third of the members present may call for the yeas and nays. (40.)

Three-fourths of the members who were present at the decision may call up a matter indefinitely postponed. (33.) This is the only motion which requires more than a majority to pass it. (33.)

Always in order: Motions—

1. To elect officers.
2. To appoint committees.
3. To enroll members. (22, 3rd.)

Privileged questions in the order of precedence:

1. To adjourn.
2. To docket.
3. To table.
4. To amend.
5. To postpone indefinitely.
6. To postpone to a particular day.
7. To commit. (27.)

To be put without debate:

1. To lay on the table. (25.)
2. To docket. (25.)
3. To take up business. (25.)
4. To adjourn. (25.)
5. To call for the question. (25 and 28.)
6. The vote when the question is ordered. (28.)
7. Appeals from two members from rulings on points of order. (15.)
8. Points of order after being ruled on. Before being ruled on they are debatable. (15.)

May speak but once: On questions of order, postponement, and commitment. On all other subjects, members may speak twice. (25.)

479. **Amendments.** One of the most difficult parliamentary rules to understand is on amending a report. A report may be amended:

1. By inserting certain words, phrases and figures in the report.
2. By adding at the end of the report.
3. By striking out certain words, phrases, etc., in the report.

4. By inserting certain words, phrases, etc., in the place of those stricken out.

5 By substituting for a paragraph another paragraph in its place.

The motion is, "I move to amend by inserting, or adding, or striking out, or substituting," etc., as the case may be.

All these are amendments of the first degree to the original paper, report or motion.

An amendment to an amendment is of the second degree, and can be applied only to the amendment. It cannot apply to some other part of the original motion now pending. It cannot apply to the amendment of the first degree if it strikes out what was put into the original motion by the first amendment after it has been put in.

480. The puzzling question of motions to amend and substitute.

Motion to amend.

A makes a motion.

B moves to amend.

C moves to amend, not *A's* motion, but *B's* amendment. Two amendments to *A's* motion cannot be entertained at the same time. If *C's* amendment is adopted, then *B's* amendment as amended is open for discussion. If it is adopted, then *A's* motion as amended is open for debate, and may be debated and amended before adoption.

Motion to substitute.

A makes a motion.

B moves a substitute for the whole of *A's* motion.

C moves a substitute for *B's* substitute and not *A's* motion. Two substitutes to *A's* motion cannot be entertained at the same time.

If *C's* substitute to *B's* substitute is adopted, then it becomes the substitute for *A's* motion.

If *C's* substitute defeats *B's* substitute, then it comes up against *A's* original motion. If *C's* substitute is adopted, it defeats *A's* original motion. *C's* substitute becomes the main question and is still open for debate or amendment, and there may be another substitute offered for the whole matter.

The motion to amend should not be confused with the motion to substitute. A motion to amend is intended to make a change in only a part of *A's* original motion.

C's amendment can change only a part of *B's* amendment.

B's substitute motion covers all of *A's* motion, and *C's* substitute covers all of *B's* substitute.

481. **Calling the previous question.** The calling of the previous question originated for the purpose of putting an end to the discussion of the main question before the court. Our Assembly has changed the motion to "calling the question," which does not apply to the main question, but to motions applied to the main question, called the "immediately pending question," except when the main question is the only matter before the body.

482. **Pending question.** The Assembly (M. G. A. 1915, p 49) "ordered that the pending question in our parliamentary rules shall mean the immediately pending question."

483. **Calling the question.** The call for the question applies only to the last motion before the court, called in the action of the Assembly in 1915 the "immediately pending question." When this motion is disposed of, the main question then comes before the house for discussion. Further amendments or substitutes or other motions applicable to the main motion may be offered and discussed. After the immediately pending ques-

tions are disposed of another motion calling the question may be applied to the main question or motion.

In order to call the question, the person should rise and be recognized by the moderator. The call for the question does not require a second before the motion can be put. The moderator having recognized the speaker should put the motion promptly. Motion to call the question is not debatable.

483-a. Recording minutes. It is not the custom of church courts to record lost motions. Neither is it the custom to record points of order that have been overruled. If amendments have been offered to a report and are adopted, they should appear in the body of the report. The minutes should read "the report of the committee was amended and adopted, and is as follows." There should be no record made of lost motions

483-b. Changing minutes. In the event the court should desire to modify, in part, any action previously taken, it will meet with many difficulties. The motion to reconsider is a motion subject to many peculiarities. In Smith's Diagram of Parliamentary Rules there are twenty rules governing this motion, eight negative and twelve affirmative. If the action taken several months ago was unanimously adopted, it would be proper either to move to reconsider, if you do not know exactly what change you desired to make, or to move to annul that part which the court unanimously desires to change. If the court is not unanimous in what is desired to be done with a part of the report, the motion must be made by one who voted on the prevailing side.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE DOCTRINE OF VOCATION

484. **Definition.** "Ordinary vocation to office in the Church is the calling of God by the Spirit, through the inward testimony of a good conscience, the manifest approbation of God's people, and the concurring judgment of a lawful court of the Church." (B. Ch. O., par. 96.)

485. **Government representative.** "The government of the Church is representative, and the right of God's people to elect their officers is inalienable. Therefore, no man can be placed over a church in any office without the election, or at least the consent, of that church." (B. Ch. O., par. 97.)

486. **Qualifications of men called.** "Upon those whom God calls to bear office in His Church He bestows suitable gifts for the dischage of their various duties. And it is indispensable that, besides possessing the necessary gifts and abilities, natural and acquired, every one admitted to an office should be sound in the faith, and his life be according to godliness. Wherefore, every candidate for office is to be approved by the court by which he is to be ordained." (B. Ch. O., par. 98.)

CHAPTER XXIV

THE DOCTRINE OF ORDINATION

487. **Definition.** "Ordination is the authoritative admission of one duly called to an office in the Church of God, accompanied with prayer and the laying on of hands, to which it is proper to add the giving of the right hand of fellowship." (B. Ch. O., par. 100.)

488. **Officers in church ordained.** The three officers of the church, the minister, the ruling elder, and the deacon, "are inducted into office by the ordination of a court." The minister is ordained by the Presbytery, the ruling elder and deacon are ordained by the Session. (B. Ch. O., par. 99.)

489. **Ordination to a definite work.** The ordination of a minister to a definite office and work does not set him apart to the performance of the duties of a ruling elder or deacon. "As every ecclesiastical office, according to the Scriptures, is a special charge, no man shall be ordained unless it be to the performance of a definite work." (B. Ch. O., par. 101.)

490. **Ordination by a court.** The authoritative admission of one duly called to the performance of a definite work must always be by a court. A quorum of the court must lay hands on the candidate. There is one exception to this, in the case of the evangelist, who is clothed with authority by the Presbytery to ordain ruling elders and deacons. (B. Ch. O., par. 38 and 100.)

491. **Each office a special charge.** "No man shall be ordained unless it be to the performance of a definite work." (B. Ch. O., par. 101.) When a deacon has been elected an elder, his ordination as a deacon cannot be substituted for his ordination as an elder. He must be ordained as an elder. The ordination of an elder

who is called to preach cannot be substituted for his ordination to the ministry.

492. Only as pastor or evangelist. A Presbytery cannot ordain a man to the Gospel ministry except as pastor or evangelist. (A. D. 1922, p. 48; M. G. A. 1893, p. 28; B. Ch. O., par. 101.)

CHAPTER XXV

CANDIDATES FOR THE GOSPEL MINISTRY

493. A member of the church. "A candidate for the ministry is a member of the church in full communion who, believing himself to be called to preach the Gospel, enters on a course of study and of practical training to prepare himself for this office." (B. Ch. O., par. 102.)

494. Under the care of Presbytery. "It is recommended that every candidate for the ministry should put himself under the care of a Presbytery, which should ordinarily be the Presbytery that has jurisdiction of the church of which he is a member. He should be encouraged by the Session to do this; and upon his request, the Session should furnish him with a certificate of his membership, and with testimonials of its judgment regarding his Christian character and promise of usefulness in the ministry, to be laid before the Presbytery." (B. Ch. O., par. 103.)

495. Examined by Presbytery. "In making application to be taken under the care of the Presbytery, the candidate for the ministry, in addition to presenting testimonials from his church Session, shall be examined by the Presbytery on experimental religion and on his motives for seeking the ministry.

"If the testimonials and the examination prove satisfactory, the Presbytery shall receive him under its care after the following manner:

"The moderator shall propose to the candidate these questions:

"(1) Do you promise, in reliance upon the grace of God, to maintain a becoming Christian character, and to be diligent and faithful in making full preparation for the sacred ministry?

"(2) Do you promise to submit yourself to the proper supervision of the Presbytery in matters that concern your preparation for the ministry?

"If these questions be answered in the affirmative, the moderator, or some one appointed by him, shall give the candidate a brief charge; and the proceedings shall close with prayer. The name of the candidate is then to be recorded on the Presbytery's Roll of Candidates for the Ministry." (B. Ch. O., par. 104.)

496. **Still a member of the church.** "The candidate continues to be a private member of the church and subject to the jurisdiction of the Session, but as respects his preparatory training for the minstry he is under the oversight of the Presbytery. It shall be the duty of the Presbytery to show a kindly and sympathetic interest in him, and to give him counsel and guidance in regard to his studies, his practical training, and the institutions of learning he should attend. In no case may a candidate omit from his course of study any of the subjects prescribed in the Form of Government as tests for licensure and ordination without obtaining the consent of Presbytery; and where such consent is given, the Presbytery shall record the fact and the reasons therefor." (B. Ch. O., par. 105.)

497. **Public worship.** "For the development of his Christian character, for the service he can render, and for his more effective training, the candidate, when entering on his theological studies, should be authorized and encouraged by the Presbytery to conduct public worship, to expound the Scriptures to the people, and to engage in other forms of Christian work. These forms of service should be rendered under the direction of Presbytery, and also with the sanction and under the guidance of the candidate's instructors during the time of his being under their instruction. A candidate should not undertake to serve statedly a

church which is without a pastor unless he has the approval of the Presbytery having jurisdiction of the church." (B. Ch. O., par. 106.)

498. **Report to Presbytery.** "The Presbytery shall require every candidate for the ministry under its care to make a report to it at least once a year; and it shall secure from his instructors an annual report upon his deportment, diligence and progress in study." (B. Ch. O., par. 107.)

499. **Withdrawal from Presbytery, or removal of candidate.** "The Presbytery may, upon application of the candidate, give him a certificate of dismission to another Presbytery; and a candidate may, at his request, be allowed to withdraw from the care of the Presbytery. The Presbytery may, also, for sufficient reasons, remove the name of a candidate from its roll of candidates; but in such case, it shall report its action and the reasons therefor to the candidate and to the Session of his church." (B. Ch. O., par. 108.)

CHAPTER XXVI

LICENSURE OF CANDIDATES

A REARRANGEMENT OF THE CHAPTERS OF THE BOOK OF CHURCH ORDER ON LICENSURE, ORDINATION, AND INSTALLATION FOR THE CONVENIENCE OF THOSE USING THIS BOOK

500. **Candidates licensed by Presbytery.** "A candidate for the ministry is licensed by the Presbytery to preach the Gospel in order that, after he has made sufficient trial of his gifts and the Presbytery has received assurance of his approval by the Church, he may be ordained to the sacred office of the Gospel ministry." (B. Ch. O., par. 109.)

501. **When Presbytery may ordain and omit licensure.** "However, if a candidate has been called to a definite work which he desires to accept, and the Presbytery is satisfied by his examination for licensure that he meets the requirements for ordination, the licensure may be omitted and the Presbytery may proceed at once to ordain him to the full ministry of the Gospel." (B. Ch. O., par. 109.)

502. **Dismissal of candidate to another Presbytery for licensure.** "The trials of a candidate applying for licensure shall be had by the Presbytery under whose care he has placed himself. But if he desires to labor within the bounds of another Presbytery, his own Presbytery may dismiss him to that Presbytery for licensure." (B. Ch. O., par. 110.)

503. **Procedure when candidate is not under care of Presbytery.** "If a candidate applying for licensure is not under the care of a Presbytery, his trials for licensure shall ordinarily be had by the Presbytery having jurisdiction of the church of which he is a member. But should the candidate find it more convenient to

stand his trials for licensure before another Presbytery, he may be received by that Presbytery on producing testimonials from the Session of the church to which he belongs and from any two ministers in good standing in the Presbytery in which the church is located, testifying as to his exemplary piety and other requisite qualifications for the Gospel ministry. And the Presbytery shall examine him respecting his experimental acquaintance with religion and the motives which influence him to desire the sacred office. The examination shall be close and particular, and should ordinarily be conducted in the presence of the Presbytery." (B. Ch. O., par. 110.)

504. **Literary and theological requirements.** "A candidate for licensure shall be required to present a diploma of bachelor or master of arts from some approved college or university, or at least authentic testimonials of having taken a regular course of academic studies. A candidate for ordination shall also be required to present a diploma from some approved theological seminary, or at least authentic testimonials of having gone through a regular course of theological studies." (B. Ch. O., par. 111.)

505. **Literary and theological examinations by Presbytery.** "The Presbytery shall examine the candidate on his knowledge of the Latin language, mental philosophy, logic, rhetoric, ethics, the natural sciences, and similar subjects, or in lieu of the examination on any of these academic studies, it may accept a diploma or certificate from an approved college. It shall also examine him on his knowledge of theology, the sacraments and church government, the original languages of the Holy Scriptures, the English Bible, and Church History, or in lieu of the examination on the original languages of the Scriptures and Church History, it may accept a diploma or certificate from an approved

theological seminary. Moreover, the Presbytery shall require:

"(1) A discussion in English, or in Latin, of a thesis on some common head in divinity.

"(2) An exegesis or critical exercise, in which the candidate shall give a specimen of his taste and judgment in sacred criticism; presenting an explication of the original text, stating its connection, illustrating its force and beauties, removing its difficulties, and solving any important question which it may present.

"(3) A lecture or exposition of several verses of Scripture.

"(4) A sermon.

"These and other similar exercises, at the discretion of the Presbytery, shall be exhibited until it shall have obtained satisfaction as to the candidate's piety, learning and aptness to teach in the Church." (B. Ch. O., par. 112-113.)

506. **No parts of trial omitted except in extraordinary cases.** "No Presbytery shall omit any of these parts of trial except in extraordinary cases; and whenever a Presbytery shall omit any of these parts it shall always make a record of the reasons therefor, and of the trial parts omitted." (B. Ch. O., par. 114.)

507. **Questions for licensure.** "If the Presbytery be satisfied with the trials of the candidate, it shall then proceed to license him in the following manner:

"The moderator shall propose to him the following questions, viz.:

"(1) Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice?

"(2) Do you sincerely receive and adopt the Confession of Faith and the Catechisms of this Church as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures?

"(3) Do you promise to study the peace, unity and purity of the Church?

"(4) Do you promise to submit yourself, in the Lord, to the government of this Presbytery, or of any other into the bounds of which you may be called?" (B. Ch. O., par. 115.)

508. **Procedure in formal licensure.** "The candidate having answered these questions in the affirmative, the moderator shall offer up a prayer suitable for the occasion, and shall address the candidate to the following purpose: 'In the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and by that authority which He has given to the Church for its edification, we do license you to preach the Gospel as a probationer for the holy ministry, wherever God in His providence may call you; and for this purpose, may the blessing of God rest upon you, and the Spirit of Christ fill your heart. Amen.'" (B. Ch. O., par. 116.)

509. **Form of license.** "And record shall be made of the licensure in the following, or like form, viz.: At ...., the.............day of..................., the Presbytery of.................., having received testimonials commending ...., and evidence of his being a communicant of the Church, of his good moral character, and of his having pursued suitable courses of study, proceeded to submit him to the prescribed tests for licensure, which were met to the approval of the Presbytery. On his satisfactorily answering the questions appointed to be put to applicants for licensure, Mr.................... was licensed by the Presbytery to preach the Gospel as a probationer for the ministry within the bounds of this Presbytery, or wherever he shall in an orderly way be invited to preach." (B. Ch. O., par. 116.)

(*Note*—This license should be dated and signed by the moderator and stated clerk and a printed copy given the licentiate. Stated clerks of Presbyteries can secure printed copies of this License from the Committee of Publication, Richmond, Virginia.)

510. When candidate removes to another Presbytery. "When any candidate for licensure shall have occasion, while his trials are going on, to remove from the bounds of his own Presbytery into those of another, it shall be considered regular for the latter Presbytery, on his producing proper testimonials from the former, to take up his trials at the point at which they were left, and conduct them to a conclusion in the same manner as if they had been commenced by itself.

"When any licentiate shall by the permission of his Presbytery remove beyond its limits, an extract of the record of his licensure, and a Presbyterial recommendation, signed by the clerk, shall be his testimonial to the Presbytery under whose care he shall come." (B. Ch. O., par. 117-118.)

511. Licentiates to give evidence of ability. "Presbyteries should require licentiates to devote themselves diligently to the trial of their gifts; and no one should be ordained to the work of the Gospel ministry until he has given evidence of his ability to edify the Church." (B. Ch. O., par. 119.)

512. Expiration of license. "The license to preach the Gospel shall expire at the end of four years, but the Presbytery may, if it thinks proper, renew it for the period of one year. If the licentiate, without necessity, shall devote himself to such pursuits as interfere with a full trial of his gifts, it shall be the duty of the Presbytery to revoke his license." (B. Ch. O., par. 120.)

CHAPTER XXVII

THE ELECTION OF PASTORS

513. Call to a definite field necessary to ordination. "Before a candidate, or a licentiate, can be ordained to the office of the ministry, he must receive a call to a definite work." (B. Ch. O., par. 121.)

514. Pastor for every church. "Every church should be under the pastoral oversight of a minister; and when a church has no pastor it should seek to secure one without delay." (B. Ch. O., par. 122.)

515. Preliminary steps to be taken by the Session. "A church shall proceed to elect a pastor in the following manner:

"The Session shall order a congregational meeting to convene at the regular place of worship. Public notice of the time, place and purpose of this meeting shall be given at least one week prior to the time of the meeting. It shall always be the duty of the Session to call a congregational meeting when requested to do so by one-fourth of the persons entitled to vote." (B. Ch. O., par. 122.)

516. The presiding officer of a congregational meeting. "When a congregation is convened for the election of a pastor, it is important that they should elect a minister of the Presbyterian Church in the United States to preside; but if this be impracticable, they may elect any male member of that Church. The Session shall appoint one of their number to call the meeting to order and to preside until the congregation shall elect their presiding officer." (B. Ch. O., par. 123.)

517. Those eligible to vote. "All communing members in good and regular standing, but no others, are entitled to vote in the churches to which they are respectively attached." (B. Ch. O., par. 123.)

518. Moderator's duties. "The voters being convened, and prayer for divine guidance having been offered, the moderator shall put the question: 'Are you ready to proceed to the election of a pastor?' If they declare themselves ready, the moderator shall call for nominations, or the election may proceed by ballot without nominations. In every case, a majority of all the voters present shall be required to elect." (B. Ch. O., par. 124.) (See paragraph 132.)

519. Procedure in the congregational meeting. The various matters relating to the election of pastors, ruling elders and deacons are given in Chapter XII on "Congregational Meetings." It has not been thought necessary to repeat these details under the subject of "The Election of Pastors."

CHAPTER XXVIII

ORDINATION OF MINISTERS, RULING ELDERS AND DEACONS

520. **Permission to receive a call.** "No minister or licentiate or candidate shall receive a call from a church but by the permission of his Presbytery. When a call has been presented to the Presbytery, if found in order and the Presbytery deem it for the good of the church, they shall place it in the hands of the person to whom it is addressed." (B. Ch. O., par. 132.)

521. **Procedure when call has been accepted.** "When a call for the pastoral services of a licentiate has been accepted by him, the Presbytery shall take immediate steps for his ordination." (B. Ch. O., par. 133.)

522. **Place of ordination.** "No Presbytery shall ordain any licentiate or candidate to the office of the Gospel ministry, with reference to his laboring within the bounds of another Presbytery, but shall furnish him with the necessary testimonials, and require him to repair to the Presbytery within whose bounds he expects to labor, that he may submit himself to its authority, according to the constitution of the Church." (B. Ch. O., par. 134.)

523. **Procedure when ordination is in a different Presbytery from that of licensure.** "Trials for ordination in a different Presbytery from that in which the candidate was licensed shall consist of a careful examination as to his acquaintance with experimental religion, as to his knowledge of philosophy, theology and ecclesiastical history, the Greek and Hebrew languages, the English Bible, and such other branches of learning as to the Presbytery shall appear requisite, and as to his knowledge of the doctrines, of the sacraments and the principles and rules of the government

and discipline of the church. Or, in lieu of the examination in philosophy, ecclesiastical history and the Greek and Hebrew languages, it may accept certificates of approved institutions of learning. He shall further be required to preach a sermon before the Presbytery. No Presbytery shall omit any of these parts of trial for ordination except in extraordinary cases; and whenever a Presbytery shall omit any of these parts, it shall always make a record of the reasons therefor and of the trial parts omitted. Trials for ordination in the same Presbytery in which the candidate was licensed may be omitted when the examination for licensure has satisfied the Presbytery of his fitness for ordination. The Presbytery, being fully satisfied of his qualifications for the sacred office, shall appoint a day for his ordination, which ought, if practicable, to be in that church of which he is to be the pastor." (B. Ch. O., par. 135.)

524. **Procedure in ordination.** "The day appointed for the ordination having come, and the Presbytery being convened, a member of the Presbytery, previously appointed to that duty, shall preach a sermon adapted to the occasion. The same, or another member appointed to preside, shall afterwards briefly recite from the pulpit the proceedings of the Presbytery preparatory to the ordination; he shall point out the nature and importance of the ordinance, and endeavor to impress the audience with a proper sense of the solemnity of the transaction." (B. Ch. O. par. 136.)

525. **Questions for ordination.** "Then addressing himself to the candidate, he shall propose to him the following questions, namely:

"(1) Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice?

"(2) Do you sincerely receive and adopt the Confession of Faith and the Catechisms of this Church, as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures; and do you further promise that if at any time you find yourself out of accord with any of the fundamentals of this system of doctrine, you will, on your own initiative, make known to your Presbytery the change which has taken place in your views since the assumption of this ordination vow?

"(3) Do you approve of the government and discipline of the Presbyterian Church in the United States?

"(4) Do you promise subjection to your brethren in the Lord?

"(5) Have you been induced, as far as you know your own heart, to seek the office of the holy ministry from love to God and a sincere desire to promote His glory in the Gospel of His Son?

"(6) Do you promise to be zealous and faithful in maintaining the truths of the Gospel and the purity and peace of the Church, whatever persecution or opposition may arise unto you on that account?

"(7) Do you engage to be faithful and diligent in the exercise of all your duties as a Christian and a minister of the Gospel, whether personal or relative, private or public, and to endeavor by the grace of God to adorn the profession of the Gospel in your manner of life, and to walk with exemplary piety before the flock of which God shall make you the overseer?" (B. Ch. O., par. 136.)

526. Formal ordination by laying on of the hands of the Presbytery. "The candidate or licentiate having answered these questions in the affirmative, the candidate or licentiate shall kneel, and the presiding minister shall, with prayer, and the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery, according to the apostolic example, solemnly set him apart to the holy office of the Gospel ministry. Prayer being ended, he shall rise from his knees, and the minister who presides shall first, and afterwards all the members of the Presbytery, in their order, take him by the right hand, saying, in words to this effect: 'We give you the right hand of fellowship, to take part in this ministry with us.' The moderator shall then say: 'I now pronounce and declare that A. B. has been regularly ordained, agreeably to the Word of God and according to the constitution of the Presbyterian Church in the United States; and that as such he is entitled to all support, encouragement, honor and obedience in the Lord: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.' And the Presbytery shall duly record the transaction." (B. Ch. O., par. 138.)

527. **Ordination of ruling elders and deacons.** See chapter on "Ruling Elders and Deacons." The procedure for the ordination of ruling elders and deacons is the same for both officers.

528. **Ordination of evangelists.** "In the ordination of candidates or licentiates as evangelists, the same questions are to be propounded as in the ordination of pastors, with the exception of the eighth, for which the following shall be substituted: 'Do you now undertake the work of an evangelist, and do you promise, in reliance on God for strength, to be faithful in the discharge of all the duties incumbent on you as a minister of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ?' " (B. Ch. O., par. 141.)

CHAPTER XXIX

INSTALLATION OF MINISTERS, RULING ELDERS AND DEACONS

A very large proportion of installations are of ordained ministers who are changing pastorates. For this reason, an installation service separate and distinct from ordination has been prepared.

529. Preliminary steps. "The day appointed for the installation having come, and the Presbytery being convened, a member of the Presbytery, previously appointed to that duty, shall preach a sermon adapted to the occasion. The same, or another member, appointed to preside, shall afterwards briefly recite from the pulpit the proceedings of the Presbytery preparatory to the installation; he shall point out the nature and importance of the pastorate and installation service and endeavor to impress the audience with a proper sense of the solemnity of the transaction." (B. Ch. O., par. 136.)

This paragraph has reference to a Presbytery meeting to ordain and install a minister. The installation of an ordained minister is usually by a Commission appointed by the Presbytery. Only members of the Presbytery can be appointed on this Commission. However, at the request of the Church, the Presbytery may invite a minister of another Presbytery to be present and assist in the installation. The Commission must be present and have charge of the service, asking the questions of the minister and congregation, and see that a sermon is preached, and that charges are given to minister and congregation, and declare the minister duly installed pastor or the church.

"The Assembly, in 1909, made the following deliverance on a quorum of a Commission to install a pastor. 'Such a quorum need not consist of a quorum of the court.'" (A. D. 1910, p. 43; M. G. A. 1909, 47.)

530. Questions for the minister to answer. "In the installation of an ordained minister, the following questions are to be addressed to the minister, namely:

"(1) Are you now willing to take charge of this congregation as their pastor, agreeably to your declaration in accepting its call?

"(2) Do you conscientiously believe and declare, as far as you know your own heart, that in taking upon you this charge you are influenced by a sincere desire to promote the glory of God and the good of the Church?

"(3) Do you solemnly promise that, by the assistance of the grace of God, you will endeavor faithfully to discharge all the duties of a pastor to this congregation, and will be careful to maintain a deportment in all respects becoming a minister of the Gospel of Christ, agreeably to your ordination engagements?" (B. Ch. O., par. 140.)

531. Questions for the congregation to answer. "The minister having answered these questions in the affirmative, the presiding minister shall propose to the church the following questions:

"(1) Do you, the people of this congregation, continue to profess your readiness to receive ...., whom you have called to be your pastor?

"(2) Do you promise to receive the word of truth from his mouth with meekness and love, and to submit to him in the due exercise of discipline?

"(3) Do you promise to encourage him in his labors and to assist his endeavors for your instruction and spiritual edification?

"(4) And do you engage to continue to him while he is your pastor that competent worldly maintenance which you have promised, and to furnish him with whatever you may see needful for the honor of religion and for his comfort among you?"

(B. Ch. O., par. 137.)

532. Formal statement of installation by presiding minister. "The people having answered these questions in the affirmative, the moderator shall then say: 'I now pronounce and declare that A. B. has been regularly elected and installed pastor of this congregation, agreeably to the Word of God, and according to the constitution of the Presbyterian Church in the United States; and that as such he is entitled to all support, encouragement, honor and obedience in the Lord: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.'" (B. Ch. O., par. 138.)

533. Charges to be delivered to pastor and congregation. "After which the minister presiding, or some other minister or ruling elder appointed for the purpose, shall give a solemn charge to the pastor and to the congregation, to persevere in the discharge of their reciprocal duties; and then, after prayer and the singing of a psalm or hymn, the congregation shall be dismissed with the benediction. And the Presbytery shall duly record the transaction." (B. Ch. O., par. 138.)

534. Cordial reception by officers, heads of families, etc. "After the installation, the heads of families of the congregation then present, or at least the ruling elders and deacons, should come forward to their pastor, and give him their right hand, in token of cordial reception and affectionate regard." (B. Ch. O., par. 139.)

535. Installation of ruling elders and deacons. See chapter on "Ruling Elders." The installation procedure is the same for both officers. See, also, the "Installation Services" on following pages.

536. The relation of assistant pastor. "The relation of assistant pastor, while not directly mentioned in our Book of Church Order, is not forbidden there, and is a possible relation." (A. D. 1922, p. 48; M. G. A. 1918, p. 54.)

537. Suggested order of service for installation of pastor. After all the preliminary steps have been taken and the Presbytery has placed the call in the hands of the pastor-elect, and after his acceptance, the Presbytery having appointed a commission to install him, the following is suggested as appropriate for the installation service:

(1) Invocation.

(2) Anthem or hymn.

(3) Scripture reading.

(4) Prayer.

(5) Hymn.

(6) Offering.

(7) Sermon.

(8) Statement by presiding minister of all preliminary proceedings.

(9) Questions to pastor-elect.

(10) Questions to the congregation.

(11) If the pastor-elect is to be ordained, the commission should proceed to ordain him, the Presbytery having previously conducted the examination.

(12) Presiding minister shall declare pastor (ordained and) installed.

(13) Charge to pastor.

(14) Charge to congregation.

(15) Prayer.

(16) Hymn (if desired).

(17) Benediction by the pastor.

(18) Welcome by ruling elders, deacons, heads of families and others.

538. **Suggested order of service for ordination and installation of ruling elders and deacons.** In the ordination and installation of ruling elders and deacons, the service is the same as that for the installation of the pastor, except that the pastor, or some one appointed, presides and preaches the sermon. After the sermon, the following order should be preserved:

(1-7) Same as in installation of a pastor.

(8) Statement of warrant and nature of office (ruling elder or deacon, as the case may be).

(9) Questions to officers.

(10) Questions to members of the church.

(11) After an affirmative answer by both officers and members, minister, together with Session, ordains officers by prayer and the laying on of hands.

(12) Extending the right hand of fellowship (pastor and officers).

(13) Declaration by minister.

(14) Suitable exhortation.

(15) Prayer.

(16) Hymn (if desired).

(17) Benediction.

CHAPTER XXX

DISSOLUTION OF THE PASTORAL RELATION

539. **Dissolution of the pastoral relation.** "When any minister shall tender the resignation of his pastoral charge to his Presbytery, the Presbytery shall cite the church to appear by its commissioner, or the church may so appear upon its own motion, to show cause, if it has any, why the Presbytery should not accept the resignation. If the church fail to appear, or if its reasons for retaining its pastor be deemed insufficient, his resignation shall be accepted, and the pastoral relation dissolved. If any church desires to be relieved of its pastor, a similar procedure shall be observed. But whether the minister or the church initiate proceedings for a dissolution of the relation, there shall always be a meeting of the congregation called and conducted precisely in the same manner as when the call of a pastor is to be made out." (B. Ch. O., par. 142.)

540. **When pastoral relation of co-pastor is dissolved.** The pastoral relation of a co-pastor, if there be any, shall be dissolved on the dissolution of the pastoral relation of the senior pastor. (B. Ch. O., par. 142.)

CHAPTER XXXI

THE ACTIVITIES AND THE ORGANIZATIONS OF THE LOCAL CHURCH

541. **General statement.** The activities of the local church find expression through its religious services and the various organizations. An outline of the various activities and the organizations suited to the average church is given below. It may be abridged or expanded to suit the local needs.

542. **Religious services.**

1. The Sabbath services, morning and evening worship.
2. The mid-week prayer service.
3. Special services.

543. **The pastor.** The pastor is a member and moderator of the Session and advisory member of all organizations. (See Chapter X on "The Minister.")

544. **The Session.** The Session exercises jurisdiction over the local church. The officers are: moderator (pastor) and clerk. Committees may be appointed on (1) Visitation of the Sick; (2) Promotion of the Spiritual Life. (See Chapter XVI, "The Session.")

545. **The deacons.** The deacons should be organized with the following: (1) Officers: chairman, secretary, treasurer of local church, treasurer of local benevolences. (2) Committees: finance and stewardship; property (supplies and repairs); ushering; visitation of the sick and needy. (See Chapter XII on "The Deacon.")

546. **Trustees.** The trustees are the custodians of the church property, deeds, etc. Officers: president, secretary, treasurer.

547. Sabbath school.

Officers:

General Superintendent.
General Secretary.
Classification Secretary.
Treasurer.

Departments:

Cradle Roll—Superintendent, secretary and teachers.
Beginners—Superintendent, secretary and teachers.
Primary—Superintendent, secretary and teachers.
Junior—Superintendent, secretary and teachers.
Intermediate—Superintendent, secretary and teachers.
Senior—Superintendent, secretary and teachers.
Young People—Superintendent, secretary and teachers.
Adult—Superintendent, secretary and teachers.
Home—Superintendent, secretary and visitors.

The Workers' Council consists of all officers and teachers, and meets monthly (or quarterly).

548. Woman's auxiliary.

Officers:

President.
Vice-president.
Secretary.
Treasurer.

Secretaries of causes:

Foreign Missions.
Assembly's Home Missions.
Christian Education and Ministerial Relief.
Religious Education and Publication.

- S. P. & C. (Synod, Presbytery and Congregational Missions).
- Spiritual Life.
- Bible Study.
- Literature and Missions.
- Pastor's aid.
- Finance.
- Flowers.
- Social activities.

Officers of Circles:

- Chairman.
- Secretary.
- Treasurer.

Executive Committee:

Composed of the General Officers, Secretaries of Causes, and Chairmen of Circles.

549. **Men's Work.**

Officers:

- President.
- Vice-president.
- Secretary.
- Treasurer.

This organization should stimulate, inspire and educate the men of the church to a more active interest in the work and program of the Assembly, Synod, Presbytery, and local church.

550. **Young People's Societies:** Senior, Intermediate and Junior Christian Endeavor, or such other organization of the young people as the Session may approve.

Officers for each society:

- President.
- Vice-president.
- Corresponding Secretary.
- Recording Secretary.

Treasurer.
Pianist.
Local union representative (in cities).

Committees:

Prayer meeting.
Lookout.
Social.
Flowers.
Music.
Information.
Finance.
Membership.
Executive Committee composed of Officers and Chairmen of other Committees.

551. **Assembly deliverance.** The Assembly approved the policy of its Executive Committee of Publication in its report, as follows:

"(a) The recognition of Christian Endeavor as one form of organization for our young people, and leaving to the Session of the Church jurisdiction as to the form of organization and activities of young people's societies and other organizations within the local church.

"(b) The continuation of the present policy of furnishing weekly topic lists for senior, intermediate and junior age groups which may be used in all of our young people's societies, and a treatment of those topics in The Program Builder, Onward and Junior Life, together with worship programs and suggestions for activities; all program material and activities to be based upon the needs and interests of the various age groups, and all integrated with the program and activities of our own Church.

"(c) That the plan of holding conferences of our young people in Synods, Presbyteries and smaller districts be encouraged; and where it is found advisable, that Synodical and Presbyterial leagues of young people be organized, to the end that denominational consciousness and loyalty may be stimulated. There are now sixteen Young People's Synodical conferences and eighteen Presbyterial conferences regularly organized in our Church." (M. G. A. 1929, pp. 63-64.)

THE CHURCH SCHOOL

552. **Organization for administering the educational work of the Church.** "The church school is the organization through which the educational work of the church is chiefly conducted. It functions through the Sunday church school, the week-day church school, the daily vacation Bible school, and in other ways. Its aim is to secure complete Christian living through belief in God as revealed in Jesus Christ, personal acceptance of Christ as Saviour and Lord, vital fellowship with Him, definite, personal commitment to the Christian life and church membership, and whole-hearted participation in the entire program of the church." (B. Ch. O., par. 331.)

553. **Exercises appropriate to the church school.** "The exercises appropriate to the church school are worship, instruction, fellowship, and expression in offerings for religious purposes and in Christian service throughout the week. These are not to interfere with the regular public worship on the Lord's Day or parental instruction." (B. Ch. O., par. 332.)

554. **Under control of Session.** "Each Session has charge of all church schools within its bounds, and shall elect annually a superintendent for each school and, on the nomination of the superintendent, with the concurrence of the pastor, all necessary Assistant Superintendents, Superintendent of Departments and General Officers. It is the duty of the Session to keep itself informed as to the condition and needs of the

church schools under its care and to see that they are provided with all things necessary to their efficient service." (B. Ch. O., par. 333.)

The Book of Church Order teaches that "the Session is to establish and control Sabbath schools." (B. Ch. O., par. 65.)

The General Assembly in 1870 adopted the following: "*Resolved,* That the Presbyteries be directed to urge it upon all their churches, wherever it is practicable, to establish schools directly under the control of the Church Sessions." (A. D. 1922, p. 531; M. G. A. 1870, p. 512.)

The Assembly in 1871 gave the following deliverance: "This Assembly deems that the Assembly of 1870 intends that the church Session shall select the superintendent, who shall nominate, with their approbation, the teachers, ordain the methods of instruction, and direct the selection of books." (A. D. 1922, p. 531; M. G. A. 1871, p. 28.)

"We recommend that Presbyteries be directed to be very careful to see that all our Sabbath schools are under the control of the Session." (A. D. 1922, p. 531; M. G. A. 1915, p. 44.)

These deliverances of the Assembly show very plainly that the Session has the authority to select the superintendent and teachers in the Sabbath school. The Session may appoint a committee, either of the Session or of officers and teachers in the Sunday school, to make recommendations to the Session. The Sabbath school has no right to take this authority out of the hands of the Session.

555. **Officers.** "Each church school shall have a superintendent, secretary and treasurer, with such assistants as may be necessary, and such other general officers as the needs of the school may demand.

"The superintendent is the chief officer of the church school. It is his duty to see that the school is organized according to the standards established by the General Assembly through its Committee on Religious Education; to have general supervision of all departments, classes and activities; to nominate to the Session, with the concurrence of the pastor, all assistants and general officers and all department superintendents, all department officers and teachers; to preside at the meeting of the committee on religious education and the workers' Council, and to bring before each of them matters requiring their consideration; and to make regular reports to the Session covering all phases of the church school.

"It is the duty of the secretary to keep accurate records of the church school and to see that the records of all departments, classes, and activities are at all times adequate and available.

"It is the duty of the treasurer to keep an accurate account of all money received by the school in all of its departments and activities, and to pay this money out as directed by the properly authorized committee. He shall prepare an annual budget for the school and submit it to the properly authorized committee two months before the close of each church year.

"Both the secretary and the treasurer shall submit regular reports to the superintendent."

(B. Ch. O., par. 334, 335.)

556. **Expenses of Sabbath schools.** "The church should seek to provide for the current expenses of the Sabbath schools, in order that the offering may go to the benevolent causes of the church, thus educating the children in the causes of the church, and training them in the principle of giving." (A. D. 1922, p. 564; M. G. A. 1916, p. 44.)

557. Qualifications of teachers. "The realization of the aims of the church school will depend very largely upon the character and qualifications of the teachers. They should be selected on the basis of spiritual experience, motives, personality, natural ability, educational ideals, and aspiration for growth in Christian character and skill in teaching. Definite training for their service should be expected of them, and opportunities for it provided. They should make careful preparation week by week, be regular and prompt in all their work, be loyal to the officers and policies of the school, and regard their calling as sacred and of the highest importance." (B. Ch. O., par. 336.)

558. Chief textbooks. "The Bible, together with the Catechisms, shall be the chief textbooks of the church school, the center of every course of instruction; and the curriculum of the church school should be so framed as to provide adequate religious education in spiritual life, missions, personal evangelism, Christian training, Christian stewardship and Christian social service. The superintendent, with the pastor, shall be responsible to the Session for the curriculum of the church school." (B. Ch. O., par. 337.)

559. Members. "The church school should be composed of the whole constituency of the church, and the worship, instruction, fellowship and training for Christian life should be appropriate to the different ages and groups." (B. Ch. O., par. 338.)

560. Missionary aims. "The executive committee has been emphasizing the importance of promoting missionary education in the Sabbath schools, and they have submitted the following 'Sunday School Missionary Aims for 1914':

"1. A missionary superintendent and committee.

"2. Officers and teachers developed in missionary leadership.

"3. A missionary impression every Sunday through Bible reading, prayer, song or formal program.

"4. Graded missionary material used in every department.

"5. Missionary literature regularly circulated.

"6. The school trained in intercession.

"7. The school instructed in Christian stewardship and contributing systematically to missions.

"8. The school engaged in some form of evangelism and social service.

"9. The school a recruiting agency for Christian leaders in social service and missions.

"10. The school actively participating in home and foreign missionary campaigns." (A. D. 1922, p. 546; M. G. A., 1914, p. 67.)

"That church schools of missions studying foreign missions be organized in every church in our Assembly during the month of January in accordance with this new plan of fostering mission study promoted by the Educational Department of the Foreign Mission Committee, that they use the text-book on Brazil now being prepared, and the others recommended for these schools of missions this year, and that all such churches send one or more delegates to the general missionary conference at Montreat to receive instruction in leading these mission study classes." (M. G. A. 1926, p. 64.)

The General Assembly has directed that the Sunday schools study each year the mission designated by the Executive Committee of Foreign Missions, and that offerings be made by the schools which are to be sent to the Foreign Mission Committee at Nashville, the same to be credited on the budget of the local church. (M. G. A. 1927, p. 63.)

561. **Reports.** The secretary of the Sabbath school, perhaps with the assistance of the superintendent,

should prepare the statistics on enrollment in each department. The financial part should be prepared by the treasurer of the Sabbath school. Each item should be entered in the proper column and the totals in their proper place. When only the total is given, it is impossible to know for which item this total has been expended.

562. The Sabbath school blank. The information gathered by this blank includes:

1. A report on membership embracing the officers and teachers, scholars, cradle roll, home department, total membership, and pupils added to the communion during the year.
2. A report on contributions by each Sabbath School
    (a) To denominational benevolences:
    1. Foreign Missions; 2. Assembly's Home Missions; 3. Christian Education and Ministerial Relief; 4. Religious Education and Publication; 5. Assembly's Training School for Lay Workers; 6. Bible cause; 7. Synod's Home Missions; 8. Orphans' Homes; 9. Educational Institutions; 10. Presbytery's Home Missions.

    (b) To local church work:
    11 and 12. Pastors' salaries; 13. Current expenses; 14. Congregational missions; 15. Building expense; 16. Miscellaneous contributions.

    (c) A report on six important questions concerning the Sabbath school as follows:
    1. Report enrollment by departments in each school as follows: Cradle roll (up to 3 years); Beginners (4-5); Primary (6-8); Junior (9-11); Intermediate (12-14); Senior (15-17); Young people's (18-23); Adult (24 up); Home department. Total.
    1. Is the Sunday school under control of Session?

2. Does the school have (a) A teacher training class? (b) A missionary committee? (c) Organized classes? (d) A workers' or teachers' conference regularly held? (e) A library?
3. Do the pupils memorize: (1) The Bible? (2) Hymns? (3) Catechisms?
4. Was a daily vacation Bible school held? Enrollment of daily vacation Bible school.
5. How many months is school open each year?
6. Is our own Church's Sabbath school literature used? What other literature is used?

YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES

563. **Historical statement.** The first formal action by the General Assembly looking to the formation of young people's societies was taken in 1892.

"(1) The Assembly would encourage the formation of such societies by our church Sessions, and under their immediate care, and advise that Sessions have a wise oversight of the literature read by them. (2) In view of the importance of wise and carefully considered action in this matter, the Assembly appoints an ad-interim committee to consider the whole matter contained in these overtures and to report to the next Assembly." (A. D. 1922, p. 566; M. G. A. 1892, p. 435.) These young people's societies were called Westminster Leagues.

564. **Christian Endeavor society's standard approved.** "The Southern Presbyterian Christian Endeavor standard proposed by the general superintendent in the annual report is approved and adopted as authoritative for senior and intermediate Christian Endeavor societies, and the Department of Young People's Work is directed to issue such literature as

may be necessary to promote its use and effectiveness." (A. D. 1922, p. 571; M. G. A. 1919, p. 63.)

565. Young people's day. The General Assembly in 1927 (M. G. A., p. 60) adopted the following: "(b) That the last Sunday in January be designated by the General Assembly as 'Young People's Day,' at which time a program will be presented in the young people's societies on young people's work, and an offering received for the young people's division."

566. Objectives of benevolences. "(c) That the objectives of benevolences for young people's societies for Assembly causes be as follows: The support of foreign missionaries named by the Executive Committee of Foreign Missions; the support of Blue Ridge Academy, Patrick County, Virginia; the Student Loan Fund of the Committee of Christian Education and Ministerial Relief; and the support of the Young People's division." (M. G. A. 1927, p. 60.)

567. Denominational relations with United Christian Endeavor Society.

"(12) That the Assembly approve the plan for denominational relations with the Christian Endeavor Society as adopted by the Educational and Administrational Committees of the United Society of Christian Endeavor, May, 1927, which is as follows:

(a) "In every instance, an effort should be made to secure an official young people's representative of the denominational board on the Board of Trustees of the United Society of Christian Endeavor.

(b) "That this plan carry down to the state unions as a recommendation, the national denominational headquarters to name the representative on the state board, or to give the information if the representative be named by the state denominational conference or other body.

(c) "Where, in any particular instance, there is or seems to be conflict between the denominational and interdenominational program, the Endeavorers and societies are referred to the programs of their own communions.

(d) "It is a principle of the United Society of Christian Endeavor that in financial connection and service, the first loyalty of a society is to the local church and denomination.

(e) "It is the policy of the United Society of Christian Endeavor that union activities be so promoted as to strengthen the local societies, individual churches and communions." (M. G. A. 1927, p. 60.) (See, also, M. G. A. 1929, p. 64.)

568. **Men's organizations.** See article under "Agencies of the Church."

569. **Woman's auxiliary.** See article under "Agencies of the Church."

SPECIAL DAYS

570. **Fasting and prayer.** The observance of days of fasting and of thanksgiving, as the dispensations of Divine Providence may direct, is both scriptural and rational.

"Fasting and thanksgiving may be observed by individual Christians; by families; by particular congregations; by a number of congregations contiguous to each other; by the congregations under the care of a Presbytery, or of a Synod, or by all the congregations of our Church.

"It should be left to the judgment and discretion of every Christian and family to determine when it is proper to observe a private fast or thanksgiving; and to the church Sessions to determine for particular congregations; and to the Presbyteries or Synods to determine for larger districts. When it is deemed expedient that a fast or thanksgiving should be general, the call for it should be issued by the General Assembly. If at any time the civil power should appoint a fast or thanksgiving, as we live under a Christian government, it is the duty of the ministers and people of our communion to pay all due respect to it.

"Public notice should be given a sufficient time before the appointed day of fasting or thanksgiving, that persons may so order their affairs as to allow them to attend properly to the duties of the day.

"There should be public worship upon all such days; and the prayers, psalms or hymns, the selections of Scripture, and sermons, should all be in a special manner adapted to the occasion.

"On days of fasting, the minister should point out the authority and providences calling for the observance, and he should spend more than the usual time in solemn prayer, particular confession of sin, especially of the sins of the day and place; and the whole day should be spent in prayer and meditation.

"On days of thanksgiving, the minister should give information respecting the authority and providences which call for the observance; and he should spend more than the usual time in giving thanks, agreeable to the occasion, and in singing psalms or hymns of praise. On these days the people should rejoice with holy gladness of heart; but their joy should be tempered with reverence, that they indulge in no excess or unbecoming levity." (B. Ch. O., par. 373-379.)

CHAPTER XXXII

THE AGENCIES OF THE CHURCH

571. General statement. The activities of the local church are not confined within its own bounds. The foreign mission work, for instance, is carried on in countries far remote from the local church. The General Assembly has established an agency in the form of the Executive Committee of Foreign Missions with officers to conduct the work of foreign missions for the whole Church. Funds are collected by the local churches and sent to this committee for the purpose of paying the expenses of the work. Missionaries are appointed and sent to foreign fields, and the work done by them is paid out of the funds contributed by the churches. This statement serves to illustrate the plan of the Church in establishing agencies to conduct the various departments of the Church's work. These executive committees make an annual report of the work to the General Assembly.

In 1926 the General Assembly appointed an ad-interim committee to make a survey of the whole Church and its work and report its findings to the General Assembly in 1927. This report, after some amendments, was adopted. The main features of this report are found in this chapter.

The General Assembly in 1927 appointed the Committee on the Assembly Work.

THE COMMITTEE ON THE ASSEMBLY'S WORK

572. Membership. "This committee shall consist of forty-four members (eleven of whom shall be women), to be elected by the General Assembly for a term of four years. On this committee each Synod of our

Church shall be represented. No person shall be eligible to serve for more than two consecutive terms. All vacancies occurring between Assemblies may be filled by the committee itself until the next General Assembly, at which time the Assembly shall fill the vacancies.

"The first committee shall be divided into four classes, which shall serve one, two, three and four years, so that about one-fourth may be elected annually.

"The General Assembly shall designate one member of the committee as chairman, who shall be 'ex officio' a member of all sub-committees. His expenses in connection with the work of the committee shall be paid by the committee, but he shall receive no salary."

573. **Sub-committees.** The Committee on the Assembly's Work was divided into seven sub-committees:

1. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES

a. Of Foreign Missions;
b. Of Home Missions;
c. Of Religious Education and Publication;
d. Of Christian Education and Ministerial Relief.

2. PROMOTIONAL COMMITTEES

a. Of Stewardship and Men's Work;
b. Of Women's Work;
c. Of Country Church.

The membership of the executive and promotional committees are formed out of the members of "The Committee on Assembly's Work." The size of each committee is given in the descriptive articles following this statement. (M. G. A. 1927, pp. 134, 135.)

574. **Duties.** The duties of "The Committee on Assembly's Work" are defined as follows:

"It shall be the duty of this committee to have the oversight and direction of all the executive and promotional agencies of the Assembly between the meetings of the Assembly; to stimulate the most perfect co-operation between all the agencies of the church; to carefully plan for advance work along all lines; to recommend to the General Assembly any new adjustment in the work of the committees it may deem wise; to recommend to the General Assembly a budget and askings for the sub-committees and the percentage to each; to at all times seek to promote an aggressive and economical administration of the Assembly's causes, and to keep the Assembly informed of the progress and needs of the work.

"It shall apportion the total askings among the Synods, with the request that the Synods, after having added such sums as their needs may require, will likewise apportion these askings to their respective Presbyteries, with further request that these Presbyteries will then apportion these together with their own askings to the local churches that there may be harmonious action. It shall perform any duties which from time to time may be assigned to it by the Assembly.

"This committee shall take into consideration and thoroughly study the possibility and feasibility, as soon as possible, of housing its various sub-committees in one building at some central point with one accounting system." (M. G. A. 1927, pp. 136, 137.)

"The Assembly's Work Committee appointed a sub-committee to investigate the feasibility of housing the committees in one building in some central place. This committee made a report advising that this be done. The Assembly's Work Committee refused to adopt the sub-committee's report in the following words: "We deem it inadvisable to relocate the Executive and Promotional Agencies. The vote was twenty-five to eleven." (M. G. A. 1929, p. 50.) The Assembly, in adopting the report of the Standing Committee on

Assembly's Work, from which the above quotation is taken, approved the decision of this committee. In addition to the above, the Assembly placed on record the considerations which influenced those voting in the majority. (M. G. A. 1929, pp. 50-51.)

574½. **Annual report to the General Assembly.** A standing committee on the report of the Assembly's Work Committee's report is appointed, and such portions of the report that are not placed in the hands of the standing committees on the four executive and three promotional committees are referred to it. The following resolution, adopted in 1928 (Minutes, page 59), outlines the duties of these committees in the distribution of this report to the various committees and the course to be pursued in the consideration of this report:

"To promote the unity of the whole work, we recommend that after each General Assembly appoints the standing committees, that the Standing Committee on the Assembly's Work shall, as soon as practicable, call into a general conference the Standing Committees on Foreign Missions, Home Missions, Christian Education and Ministerial Relief, Religious Education and Publication, Stewardship and Men's Work, and Woman's Work and Country Church, in order to carefully consider the report of the Committee on the Assembly's Work and its recommendations in their bearing on each of these sub-committees."

While the Assembly has not taken the following action, it is our judgment that if the following course should be pursued by the chairmen of these standing committees, much clearer and more satisfactory reports would be the result:

"After each standing committee has prepared its report, the chairmen of these committees should meet with the chairman of the Standing Committee on the

Assembly's Work and compare their reports and see that there are no duplications in the items reported on by any of the committees."

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF FOREIGN MISSIONS

575. Brief historical statement. When organized in 1861, our Church declared that "The General Assembly desires distinctly and deliberately to inscribe on our Church's banner, as she now first unfurls it to the world, in immediate connection with the Headship of her Lord, His last command, 'Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature.' "

On account of war conditions, no missionaries were sent to foreign lands until 1867, when Rev. E. B. Inslee and family, of Mississippi, opened our work in China. In 1929, we had 434 foreign workers and 3,177 native workers engaged in missionary work in Africa, China, Japan, Korea, Brazil and Mexico.

576. Administration. The Executive Committee is appointed by the Committee on the Assembly's Work, and consists of twelve members, to which the Executive Committee reports annually all of its acts and proceedings. Meetings are held monthly.

This committee "directs and superintends the foreign missionary work in all of its departments, but exercises no ecclesiastical functions. It appoints missionaries, designates their field of labor, and determines their particular employment. It prepares and circulates such publications as may promote interest and effort in the cause of foreign missions. It is charged with receiving, guarding and disbursing all funds contributed for foreign mission work."

The Executive Committee is organized into various sub-committees to which all matters are referred for detailed consideration to be reported back to the Executive Committee for final action.

577. **Secretaries.** The Executive Committee determines the scope of work for each department secretary and makes definite assignments. The secretaries of the Executive Committee are as follows:

578. "**The Executive Secretary.** The Executive Secretary is responsible for the general conduct of the office, directing its administration. He keeps the Church informed through the press of the condition and needs of the work.

579. "**Foreign Secretaries.** Foreign Secretaries conduct the correspondence with the missions and attend to all correspondence pertaining to the Candidate Department. They are especially charged with the visitation of schools, colleges, and seminaries to present the claims of the foreign work. They have the supervision of the candidates with the view of directing them in their preparation. A card record of all appointees and applicants for foreign service is kept in the office of the Foreign Secretaries, showing the stage of preparation of each appointee and applicant.

580. "**Secretary of Home Development.** The Secretary of Home Development is in charge of the arrangement of Foreign Mission Conferences, the itineraries of missionaries on furlough, the Lantern Slide Department and general correspondence on matters relating to the development of foreign mission interest at the home base.

581. "**Educational Secretary.** The Educational Secretary's work is to initiate and maintain a comprehensive educational work throughout the Church, including the recommendation of policies for missionary education in Sunday schools, young people's and other societies, schools, colleges and seminaries. He is responsible for the preparation and sending out of pro-

grams and literature necessary to the educational propaganda, and has charge of foreign mission literature in the office and its distribution.

582. "**Treasurer.** The Treasurer is the custodian of the funds of the Executive Committee, both in receiving and disbursing. He holds the deeds to property and any bonds or securities belonging to the committee. He is responsible for purchasing outfits and arranging the transportation of all outgoing missionaries. He receives and transmits to the committee the annual budgets of the missions and is in general charge, under the direction of the committee, of all financial details."

583. **Week of prayer.** The week ending with the first Sunday in February is fixed by the General Assembly as the time for prayer and preaching in behalf of the great work of foreign missions.

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF HOME MISSIONS

584. **General statement.** This committee consists of seven members appointed by the Committee on the Assembly's Work. The work of this committee has grown gradually until it embraces a very wide scope. It was first called "The Committee of Domestic Missions." Later the name was changed to "The Committee of Sustentation." In 1864 the committee was consolidated with the Executive Committee of Foreign Missions, the office being located in Columbia, South Carolina. In 1882 the two committees, then located in Baltimore, Maryland, were separated, and in 1886 the Executive Committee of Home Missions was moved to Atlanta, Georgia, its present location.

585. **Officers.** The General Assembly elects an executive secretary and a general secretary. The Executive Committee elects the other officers.

586. Departments. There are eight departments which have been developed in the following order: Sustentation, Church Erection and Frontier Work. Later the department of Evangelism was established. In 1889 the Missions Schools department came into existence through the transfer of the Indian work from the Executive Committee of Foreign Missions to the Executive Committee of Home Missions. Schools are also conducted among negroes, foreigners and mountaineers, giving to this committee the departments of Colored Evangelization, Foreign Speaking People, and Mountain Missions.

587. Home Mission Week. The week beginning with the third Sunday in November is Home Mission Week, by action of the General Assembly. Pastors are urged to make a "profound study of the perils facing the Church and nation," to the end that our whole Church may be aroused "to the high claims of home missions as the essential basis of the permanence and progress of our beloved Church."

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND PUBLICATION

588. General statement. This committee consists of seven members appointed by the Committee on the Assembly's Work. The work of this agency began with the organization of our Southern Church. In spite of handicaps incident to the Civil War, work was carried on. "The Children's Friend," now "Junior Life," was started in 1862. During the war, millions of pages of printed matter were circulated among the Southern soldiers.

The first building was occupied in 1866. A branch depository was established at Texarkana, Arkansas-Texas, in 1906. Both the main office and the branch now occupy splendid buildings owned by the committee. In 1902 the volume of annual sales reported to the Assembly was $30,000, while for 1929 it reached a total of $633,355.16.

Lesson helps were issued as early as 1870, the first of the series being the well-known "Earnest Worker." In 1875 the Uniform International Lesson System came into existence and our committee joined this movement. The circulation of lesson-helps has grown from 3,600,000 in 1902 to more than 5,495,638 in 1929, including the "Presbyterian Survey." A completely organized Sunday School Department with full-time superintendent was authorized by the Assembly of 1900. The editorial staff has grown from three to twelve in order to meet the expanding needs of our Sunday schools. In 1902 there were seven colporteurs who made the organization of Sunday schools an incident in their work. In 1929 there were fifty-one field workers supported in whole or in part by this committee, and their major task is the organization of new Sunday schools and the introduction of better methods of work into existing schools.

589. **Officers.** The Executive and Co-ordinate Secretaries are elected by the General Assembly. The superintendents of the various departments are selected and appointed by the committee.

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AND MINISTERIAL RELIEF

590. **General statement.** This committee consists of seven members appointed by the Committee on the Assembly's Work. Early recognition was given to the obligation which rests upon the Church to provide for her disabled ministers and their families. A "Fund for Pious Uses" was started in 1717 at a meeting of the Presbyterian Synod held at Philadelphia. After the organization of the Southern Presbyterian Church

in 1861 this work was carried on by the Home Mission Committee through the "Invalid Fund" until 1901, when the "Executive Committee of Ministerial Relief" was erected.

"The Board of Education for the Ministry" was erected by the General Assembly in 1819. When our Church began its separate existence, one of the first works organized was that of the Executive Committee of Education for the Ministry. In 1904, the General Assembly combined the "Committee of Education for the Ministry" and the "Committee of Ministerial Relief" into the "Executive Committee of Ministerial Education and Relief" and moved the headquarters to Louisville, Kentucky. In 1913, the newly formed "Executive Committee of Schools and Colleges" was consolidated with this committee and the name was changed to "The Executive Committee of Christian Education and Ministerial Relief."

Officers — An Executive Secretary elected by the Assembly, and a Treasurer and other officers elected by the committee.

The following lines of work have been approved by the General Assembly:

1. Education for the ministry and mission service.
2. Ministerial relief.
3. Endowment Fund for Ministerial Relief. Erecting a permanent fund of $2,500,000 ($1,583,116 of which is now in hand).
4. Schools and colleges.
5. Student Loan Fund.

591. **Loans on education for the ministry and mission service.** Loans are made to both young men and women, to be repaid in service of $175 a year (to those that need that much) while in college, seminary or training school.

592. Student Loan Fund. From this fund boys and girls of approved character and ability, from poor Presbyterian homes, may borrow $150 a year for the four years of the college course, if they desire to go to a Presbyterian college.

593. Memorial scholarships. A gift of six hundred dollars establishes a scholarship, the interest on which is given some worthy student.

594. Ministers' Annuity Fund.

The Ministers' Annuity Fund covers all ministers who, on January 1, 1931, are in active service, no matter what age they have reached, and it will cover all ministers ordained or otherwise received into the Presbyteries after that date, thus gradually covering the entire ministry of the Church automatically.

Ministers who have retired before January 1, 1931, will be taken care of as heretofore from the funds of ministerial relief. Ministers who on that date have not retired, but are not then in active service may enter the fund when they return to active service upon equitable terms. Provision is also made for certain classes of unordained workers whose work parallels that of the minister of the Gospel.

The Ministers' Annuity Fund will be perpetuated by two classes of pension payments and the marvelous working of compound interest. First, the payment by the church or group of churches or other church employment agency of an amount equal to 7½ per cent of the salary paid. If manse is provided in addition to the cash salary paid by the church, it will be reckoned at 15 per cent of the salary. When a minister's salary is paid by two or more churches or committees or boards, each employment agency pays 7½ per cent of the salary it provides.

The second class of pension payments is that by the minister himself. He agrees to pay 2½ per cent of his total salary. By salary is meant all income from church sources which he receives for his general use, but does not cover such items as money given specifically for automobile upkeep, marriage fees, honoraria and other such items.

Both classes of pension payments should be paid concurrently. Full payment by both minister and church are necessary in order to provide the full benefits set out in the Ministers' Annuity Fund.

All payments by both church and ministers are payable monthly. This is very important from an actuarial standpoint and by frequent remittances payments are kept small, and therefore it is easier to make them.

These pensions payments made by the minister and on his behalf by the church, if received for thirty-five years for ministers ordained on or after January 1, 1931, will produce the full pension provided in the rules. If he continues in the service after age sixty-five larger benefits will accrue.

The pension benefits stated in general terms are as follows:

For the minister ordained (or entering the fund) after January 1, 1931, pension payments will be made by him and on his behalf for each year of service. This will entitle him to a pension equal to one-seventieth of his salary for each year of service on retirement at sixty-five years, with a minimum pension of six hundred dollars, and at any age upon total and permanent disability he will receive forty per cent of the average salary during the last five years of service under the plan—limited at the beginning to six hundred dollars a year. The widow will receive one-half of the pension to which her husband would have been entitled. The minor orphans will each receive one hundred dollars a year.

Any minister in active service of the Church, whatever age he may have attained, is eligible to enter the fund. If he does so, he will be granted the minimum pension of six hundred dollars at retirement when he has reached or passed age sixty-five, after thirty-five years of service, which will come in whole or in part from the three million dollars accrued liability fund. Benefits also will go to his widow or minor orphan children. For future service, i. e., service after the inauguration of the fund, each minister will receive one-seventieth of his actual salary for each year of service under the plan.

595. **Day of prayer for schools and colleges.** The General Assembly has fixed the last Sunday in February as the day of prayer for schools and colleges and the youth gathered in them. It is designed that the week preceding be devoted to special intercession for our youth and their teachers and for the schools and colleges of the entire world.

STEWARDSHIP AND MEN'S WORK

596. **General statement.** This is a promotional subcommittee of "The Committee on the Assembly's Work." It consists of five members. The duties of this committee are defined as follows:

"It shall be the duty of this committee to promote the study and practice of stewardship throughout the Church; to act as the authorized publicity representative of the Assembly, and to stimulate, inspire and educate the men of the Church to a more active interest in the work and program of the Assembly, Synod, Presbytery and local church, and to encourage and promote the Every-member Canvass in all the churches. The work, contracts and obligations of the Assembly's Stewardship Committee and the Permanent Committee of Men's Work shall be continued until such time as the Assembly's Work Committee shall work out the union of these two committees, and said Assembly's Work Committee shall have full power to adjust all differences and shall have the right to make such readjustments in the work and organization of the promotional sub-committees as shall be conducive to efficiency and economy and in line with the purposes of the Survey Committee." (M. G. A. 1927, p. 137.)

Officers—Secretaries are elected by the Assembly.

The following statement concerning the origin and progress of men's work is given:

MEN'S WORK

597. **General statement.** A Men-of-the-Church organization was introduced early in 1924. Prior to this time the Laymen's Missionary Movement had been holding biennial and annual conventions for a number of years. The Men-of-the-Church organization is along the line of the Presbyterian Progressive Program with its five departments: 1. Spiritual Life; 2. Evangelism and Missions; 3. Christian Training; 4. Stewardship of Possessions; 5. Christian Social Service.

The Men's Work gives promise of becoming a vital factor in developing and training leaders as well as making the rank and file of the church more intelligent and devoted to all her interests.

A full-time secretary of Men's Work was authorized by the General Assembly of 1923. A summary of the methods employed by him is as follows:

Personal visitation of churches.

Correspondence.

Conference by groups, Presbyteries and Synods.

Literature.

Leadership Training Classes incorporated in the Standard Training Schools.

The work of this committee was combined with that of Stewardship by the General Assembly of 1927, the new name of the committee being "The Committee on Stewardship and Men's Work."

THE COMMITTEE ON WOMEN'S WORK

598. **The Committee on Women's Work.** This committee consists of five members and is also a promotional sub-committee of "The Committee on the Assembly's Work." Its duties are defined as follows:

"It shall be the duty of this committee to stimulate, educate and inspire the women of the church to a more active interest in the work and program of the Assembly, Synod, Presbytery and local church." (M. G. A. 1927, p. 138.)

The following statement concerning the history of the origin and work of the Woman's Auxiliary is given:

WOMAN'S AUXILIARY

599. **Historical statement.** Throughout the history of the Church, women have always been active in its work. This activity has sought a channel of expression that would enlist not only those interested in foreign missions, but that should include, as far as possible, all women in the Church in a program that would embrace the entire work of the Kingdom, abroad as well as in the local church.

As a result of an overture to the General Assembly from the Synodical of Missouri, with the approval of five other Synodicals, the General Assembly of 1912 instructed the four executive secretaries of the executive committees "to meet with the women in August, at Montreat, for the purpose of forming a constitution and choosing our superintendent, as the 'secretary' was to be called." Mrs. W. C. Winsborough was elected superintendent and she was succeeded in 1929 by Miss Janie W. McGaughey. Her office now is 256-259 Field Building, St. Louis, Missouri. Mrs. D. A. McMillan, Fulton, Missouri, has served as treasurer since 1913.

"The women of the Presbyterian Church U. S. cooperate in the work of the Church in a unique plan unlike any other woman's missionary organization in America. As members of the church, they discharge the responsibility to all the departments of mission work through the regular channels of the church. In addition to this, they are banded together as an auxiliary to do an additional service to these same departments of the great Church to which they belong. They have no separate board, are responsible for no independent work. The program of the church is their program, the responsibility of the church is their responsibility.

"For efficiency, educational growth and spiritual development, the plan has been an unqualified success."

600. Organization. The Woman's Advisory Committee is composed of the Synodical presidents, the auxiliary superintendent and auxiliary treasurer. This committee meets annually. There were, in 1929, sixteen Synodicals, ninety-one Presbyterials, and 2,379 local auxiliaries, with a total membership of 144,884 women.

601. Activities. In 1929 the contributions to all causes amounted to $1,610,218. These gifts were "over and above" the contributions of individual women through church treasurers, but go to support the same causes and in the same percentage.

Members of the auxiliaries engage each year in study classes on the Bible, foreign missions, home missions, and stewardship. "The Synodicals are to a large degree training schools for the Presbyterial officers, and clearing houses for the problems of the Presbyterials." They meet annually, and all Presbyterial officers are delegates. The Presbyterial auxiliaries are organized for promoting greater efficiency in the local auxiliaries, and the annual meetings are attended by delegates from the local auxiliaries of the Presbytery.

602. **Local auxiliary.** The local auxiliary has a threefold outline of work: 1. Educational; 2. Spiritual; 3. Financial. All the women of the local church are enrolled in its membership by virtue of their church membership. For greater efficiency, the local auxiliary should be divided into circles. The auxiliary has a secretary for every cause in the Church.

603. **Colored women's conferences.** "The attention of the Assembly is especially called to the colored women's conferences. The eleventh annual conference was held last year (1926). The Woman's Auxiliary inaugurated this movement among the colored women, which has been adopted successfully among other churches and which has met with such success in our own Church. During the present year fifteen of these conferences will be held in fourteen Synodicals. The subjects presented are practical and the women return to their homes greatly enthused and become themselves centers of influence. It is believed and hoped that the time will come when such conferences should be held in every Presbyterial." (M. G. A. 1927, p. 35.)

604. **"Birthday offerings."** Each year, beginning with 1922, the auxiliary has given an "over and above" gift to some designated object of equipment of home and foreign missions on the "birthday" of its organization which was effected in May, 1912. These seven offerings have been made to the following objects. The total amounts and objects are as follows:

1922.	Miss Dowd's School in Japan	$ 25,000
1923.	School for Mexican Girls—Taft, Texas	51,000
1924.	President's Home, A. T. S.	23,000
1925.	Charlotte Kemper School, Lavras, Brazil	39,000
1926.	Endowment Bible Chair, O. P. C., Durant, Oklahoma	41,000
1927.	Kwangju Girls' School, Korea	56,000
1928.	Emily Estes Snedecor Training School for Colored Nurses, Tuscaloosa, Alabama	41,735
		$276,735

605. "Survey Week" and "Church Paper Week." The General Assembly has fixed the first week in May as "Survey Week" and the week beginning with the first Sunday in November as "Church Paper Week." Both of these "weeks" are sponsored by the Woman's Auxiliary.

"The Presbyterian Survey" is the official organ of the Presbyterian Church, U. S., and is published monthly by our Executive Committee of Religious Education and Publication, Richmond, Virginia. Every agency of our Church is given space in this magazine. Single subscriptions, $1.25 per year; in clubs of five or more (separately addressed), $1.00 per year.

There are three weekly religious papers privately owned, but devoted to the causes of our Church. They are:

"*Christian Observer*," published at Louisville, Kentucky.

"*The Presbyterian of the South*," published at Richmond, Virginia.

"*Presbyterian Standard*," published at Charlotte, North Carolina.

606. Woman's position in the church. "In response to the overture from the Presbytery of Concord asking the Assembly to make deliverance of the right of women to speak on the floor of church courts, the Assembly would reply by reaffirming previous deliverance (Alexander's Digest, 1922 Edition, page 56):

"'It is the settled doctrine of our Church that women are excluded from licensure and ordination by the plain teachings of the Scriptures, and, therefore, cannot be admitted to our pulpits as authorized preachers of the Word, and also that they are prohibited from speaking by way of exhortation or leading prayer or discussing any question publicly in the meetings of the church or congregation as a mixed assembly." However, presenting a report to a church court of work done by auxiliary or other associations is not to be construed as speaking or discussing if due care is taken that such reports when presented by women are not made the occasion of speaking by them, and ordinarily these reports ought to be presented through the Advisory Committee or some member of the court appointed for that purpose.'" (M. G. A. 1925, p. 67.)

"That overtures numbers 12, 13 and 14 from the Presbyteries of Enoree, St. John's, and Savannah, asking for the reaffirmation of the Assembly's deliverance of 1916, forbidding women's preaching, and leaving their other activities to the discretion of the Sessions and to the consciences of consecrated women, be answered in the affirmative, the following being the deliverance thus reaffirmed:

"That this Assembly reaffirm the following action of the Assembly of 1880:

"'Inasmuch as the public preaching of the Gospel is a branch of the ministerial office, to the authorization of which ordination or licensure is essential, and inasmuch as inspired Scripture, as interpreted by our Standards, nowhere in the case of women sanctions such a solemnity, but, on the contrary, does clearly prohibit it, this Assembly does therefore declare the assumption of this sacred office by women to be opposed to the advancement of true piety and to the promotion of the peace of the Church, and this to such an extent as to make the introduction of women into our pulpits for the purpose of publicly expounding God's Word an irregularity not to be tolerated.

" 'It is the settled doctrine of our Church that women are excluded from licensure and ordination by the plain teaching of the Scriptures, and therefore cannot be admitted to our pulpits as authorized preachers of the Word.'

"That other services of Christian women be left to the discretion of the Sessions and the enlightened consciences of our Christian women themselves.

"But, while women are thus debarred from certain forms of service in the Church, there are others to which they are freely admitted and which afford full scope for their devotion. It is significant that while they are excluded by distinct prohibition from the office of Presbyter, with its distinctive functions, no such barrier is thrown around the deacon's ministry. The omission strongly suggests that to this ministry women are eligible equally with men. Besides, there are certain Scriptures which seem positively to teach that in the Apostolic Churches there were both male and female deacons. Phoebe was a 'servant,' literally a Deacon, of the church in Cenchrea, and as such was cordially commended by the Apostle Paul to the Christians at Rome. Dr. Magill says: 'From John Calvin to Charles Hodge, we have a singular succession of learned and illustrious men affirming the official meaning of deaconess in its application to Phoebe.' Dr. Chalmers says: 'Phoebe belonged to the order of deaconesses, in which capacity she had been the helper of many, including Paul himself.' In I Timothy 3:11, according to the reading of the Revised Version, we find Paul laying down the qualifications necessary for women who would engage in the work of deacons. Our own 'Book of Church Order' recognizes the propriety of setting apart of godly women to labor as deaconesses in the congregations to which they belong. This is a ministry for which women are peculiarly fitted, and it offers opportunity for unlimited usefulness. The way is open for devoted women to serve the Lord and His Church through a quiet, unobtrusive, house-to-house ministry, to the poor, the sick, the afflicted, and the ignorant, especially among those of their own sex and the young. Already the Church is using women for the duties of the diaconate, without recognizing or naming them as deaconesses. Women are sent out by the Church to labor as missionaries in foreign fields, as teachers, nurses, Bible readers, etc., and to enter doors which are often closed to men. The fact that they are thus set apart by the Church to this work, supported and controlled by the Church, establishes an official relation between them and the Church. What is that relation? It is certainly not the relation of Presbyter or elder, and, if it be not that of deacon, the Church is using an official agency for which she has no warrant in Scripture. The same may be said of men who are sent to the foreign fields as medical missionaries or industrial helpers. Their ministry is in 'those things which are needful for the body.' Are they not New Testament deacons, serving the Church in the regions beyond, and should they not be so recognized and named?" (M. G. A. 1926, pp. 52-53.)

607. Privilege of superintendent to read her report. "The superintendent of the Woman's Auxiliary is not an executive secretary of the General Assembly, but is an authorized and responsible agent of the Assembly; and as such she has a natural right to read her report to the Assembly, but this privilege does not carry any implication of membership in the Assembly or of participation in its discussions." (M. G. A. 1926, p. 43.)

608. Name of Woman's Auxiliary changed. "We recommend that the Woman's Auxiliary of the General Assembly be hereafter known as the Department of Woman's Work; its committee, the Committee on Woman's Work; and its secretary, the Secretary of Woman's Work; but that these terms shall not be used in the Synodical, Presbyterial and congregational organizations of this work." (M. G. A. 1928, p. 57.)

THE AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY

609. An agency of the Church. In 1890, the Assembly adopted the American Bible Society as an agency of the Church and directed that a column be added to the statistical table for the contributions to the Bible cause. In 1891, the Assembly directed that our churches take the collection on the third Sunday in October. Beginning in 1912, the Assembly placed the Bible cause in the budget of the Church for a definite sum. No special day is now given to this cause as it is included with all the other causes of beneficence, receiving one per cent of the budget for Assembly causes.

THE BUREAU OF VACANCY AND SUPPLY

610. Resolutions authorizing its establishment. The following resolutions establishing the Bureau of Vacancy and Supply in the office of the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly were adopted in 1924:

"1. Your committee recommends the placing of a Bureau of Vacancy and Supply as a department in the office of the Stated Clerk of the Assembly, and directing him to make immediate provision for organizing the work and securing the co-operation of all Presbyteries, churches and ministers.

"2. He shall obtain complete records of all ministers and churches as soon as practicable upon blanks sent out from his office; shall keep full record of all vacant churches, of all ministers unemployed and of those seeking or needing change of field, and shall furnish this information upon written request of those ministers and churches rightly inquiring, so as to make this office a clearing house and an aid to both ministers and churches. This Bureau is in no sense an employment agency.

"3. The Stated Clerk shall be authorized to employ such additional clerical help and purchase such additional equipment as shall be found necessary for inaugurating and maintaining this work.

"4. The General Assembly shall provide out of the budget for this extra service on the part of the Stated Clerk additional compensation of nine hundred dollars per year, effective as of April 1, 1924.

"5. (The Superintendent of Home Missions of each Presbytery, or the chairman where there is no superintendent employed, shall communicate promptly with the Sessions of all vacant churches relative to supplying the pulpit temporarily and permanently, putting the Session in touch with the Assembly's Bureau of Vacancy and Supply.)

"It shall be the duty of the Stated Clerks of Presbyteries to notify all vacant churches of the work of the Bureau of Vacancy and Supply, and also the Stated Clerk of the Assembly of all vacant churches and available men.

"6. The Sessions of all vacant churches are urged to avail themselves of the services of the Bureau of Vacancy and Supply and provide for permanent supply of their pulpits without unnecessary delay that the advancement of the Kingdom of Christ be not hindered but hastened." (M. G. A. 1924, p. 72.)

611. Special days. In addition to the ordinary activities and religious services which have been outlined in the previous pages, there are special days appointed by the General Assembly for special religious services. The dates for these special days change from year to year. For information concerning them, see the minutes of the General Assembly for the current year.

612. Fasting, prayer and thanksgiving. The Directory for Worship contains directions and suggestions for fasting, prayer and thanksgiving. (B. Ch. O., par. 373-379; also par. 570, this volume.)

CHAPTER XXXIII

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

I. IN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The Church has established educational institutions as follows:

1

613. **Theological seminaries.** Our theological seminaries are not under the direct control of the General Assembly, but of Synods. The relation of these seminaries to the Church is defined in the following actions of the General Assembly:

614. **Relation of theological seminaries to the Assembly.** "In reply to the injunction laid upon us to find and state the relation existing between this General Assembly and the theological seminaries organized within the pale of our Church, we report:

"1. That this Assembly sustains very important relations to all such institutions; yet these relations differ somewhat according to the constitution and practice of each institution as ratified by the Assembly.

"2. That by the very genius of Presbyterianism, the Assembly is bound to maintain a supervisory jurisdiction over these and all other like corporations, and also over all schemes for religious work, so far as they affect the practice or doctrine of the Assembly's constituencies, and especially the office bearers of the Church.

"3. That this jurisdiction must in every case enable the Assembly, through the proper channels of authority, to keep all such institutions free from everything inconsistent with the spirit of our system, and, of course, free from all teaching inconsistent with the Word of God as expounded in our Standards." (A. D. 1922, p. 492; M. G. A. 1886, p. 43.)

The Assembly lodged with the board of directors the power of electing professors, reserving the right of review and approval. (A. D. 1922, p. 477; M. G. A. 1877, p. 439.)

615. **Theological seminaries not under the control of the Assembly.** Two overtures were presented to the Assembly in 1923 asking for the appointment of an ad-interim committee on the whole question of theological seminaries and theological education. The Assembly declined to appoint this committee for two reasons:

"First—That our theological seminaries are not under the control of the General Assembly, but of the Synods, and such radical changes as these overtures propose would be an invasion of long constituted rights.

"Second — That the apointment of a committee whose duty it is to be, practically, to tell the faculties of our theological seminaries what they are to teach is neither wise nor proper." (M. G. A. 1923, p. 34.)

616. **Age limit for professors.** An age limit is set for the retirement of professors in some of our theological seminaries. The rule varies in the seminaries.

617. **Report to General Assembly.** The boards of trustees of the theological seminaries are required to make a report to the General Assembly at the close of the seminary year. (A. D. 1922, p. 478; M. G. A. 1892, p. 424.)

618. **Items to be included in report to General Assembly.**

"1. The names and addresses of trustees.

"2. The names of the members of the faculty.

"3. The names of newly elected members of the faculty, together with their respective chairs.

"4. The total amount of endowments.

"5. The estimated values of buildings and grounds.

"6. The additions to endowments and equipment during the year.

"7. The total annual income from all sources.

"8. The total annual expenditures.

"9. The number of students and their distribution in the several classes.

"10. The installation of new professors.

"11. The names of those receiving degrees, diplomas and certificates.

"12. A detailed list of the courses of study offered by the institution."

(A. D. 1922, p. 498; M. G. A. 1915, p. 80-d.)

2

619. **Training School.** The Assembly's Training School for Lay Workers is under the direct control of the Assembly, and its trustees are elected by the Assembly. The object and aim of the Training School is to "train men and women for all forms of Christian service at home and abroad."

620. **Standing committees to be appointed.** Presbyteries and Synods are requested to appoint standing committees on the Training School. (M. G. A. 1924, p. 36.)

3

621. **Training school for colored people.** Stillman Institute for Boys and Stillman Institute for Girls; "Estes Snedecor Memorial Training School for Negro Nurses."

II. IN PRESBYTERY AND SYNOD

622. (1) **Colleges.** All these are under the control of either Presbytery or Synod. There are eighteen Colleges; one affiliated College; thirteen Junior Colleges; twelve Secondary schools; twelve Mountain Secondary schools; seven Mountain Elementary schools.

(2) Two Mexican Mission Schools; one The Texas-Mexican Institute for Men, Kingsville, Texas; one for Mexican Girls, Taft, Texas.

(3) Orphans' Homes. There are fifteen Orphans' Homes. For further information, see the annual report of the Executive Committee of Christian Education and Ministerial Relief, printed in the Annual Volume of Reports.

III. IN THE LOCAL CHURCH

623. (1) Religious services.
(2) Sabbath schools.
(3) Catechetical instruction.
(4) Family religion.
(5) Young people's work.
(6) Daily vacation Bible schools.
(7) Missionary education.
(8) Stewardship study classes.

624. **Presbyterian Historical Foundation.** The name for this organization is "The Historical Foundation of the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches." This foundation was established in 1927 by the General Assembly after an ad interim committee had considered the matter for one year and made a report which was adopted by the General Assembly.

The recommendations of the report are as follows:

"Inasmuch as the Rev. S. M. Tenney, D. D., and the Presbyterian Historical Society of the Southwest have agreed to deliver to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, without cost, their collection of historical materials, we recommend:

"*First:* That the General Assembly accept with gratitude the collection of historical records and establish now 'The Historical Foundation of the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches' to administer this department of the Church's work.

"*Second:* That the following constitution be adopted governing the said Historical Foundation of the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches. (See M. G. A. 1927, p. 145.)

"*Third:* That nine persons be named by this Assembly as the Executive Committee of the Historical Foundation of the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches.

"*Fourth:* That the General Assembly accept the gracious offer of the Mountain Retreat Association to house the Historical Foundation of the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches and its materials in commodious, fireproof quarters, including office space for the curator and his records, at Montreat, North Carolina, without cost to the General Assembly.

"*Fifth:* That the Rev. S. M. Tenney, D. D., be employed as the curator of the Historical Foundation of the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches for a period of three years, and that after that time the selection of the curator be left in the hands of the authorities provided for in the constitution.

"*Sixth:* That the salary of the curator, together with the expense necessary for making the collection available for the Church and for adding new records be provided for by a tax of one cent per member on the membership of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, this tax to be collected by the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly along with his other assessments against the churches. He shall pay to the Historical Foundation only the amount realized from the contingent fund assessment of one cent per member, and payments shall be made monthly to the treasurer of the Historical Foundation of the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches.

"*Seventh:* That in order to finance the Historical Foundation of the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches for the Church year 1927-1928, the one cent tax referred to in Recommendation No. 6 be made retroactive for the Church year 1926-1927, and that the Stated Clerk take immediate steps to collect this amount from the churches for financing during the Church year 1926-1927." (M. G. A. 1927, pp. 143, 144.)

625. **Expenses of historical foundation made a part of the budget.** The Assembly, in 1929, combined all the expenses of the office of the Stated Clerk and the historical foundation and placed the sum of four thousand five hundred dollars in the budget for the support of the historical foundation, and directed the treasurer to pay this amount out of the funds in his hands. (M. G. A. 1929, p. 70.)

CHAPTER XXXIV

ORDINANCES

1. THE SABBATH

626. A divine institution. "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it." (Exodus 20:8-11.)

"As it is the law of nature, that, in general, a due proportion of time be set apart for the worship of God; so, in His Word, by a positive, moral and perpetual commandment, binding all men in all ages, He hath particularly appointed one day in seven for a Sabbath, to be kept holy unto Him: which, from the beginning of the world to the resurrection of Christ, was the last day of the week; and, from the resurrection of Christ, was changed into the first day of the week, which in Scripture is called the Lord's Day, and is to be continued to the end of the world, as the Christian Sabbath." (C. of F., Ch. XXI, Sec. 7.)

627. Sanctification. "This Sabbath is then kept holy unto the Lord, when men, after a due preparing of their hearts, and ordering of their common affairs beforehand, do not only observe an holy rest all the day from their own works, words and thoughts, about their worldly employments and recreations; but also are taken up the whole time in the public and private exercises of His worship, and in the duties of necessity and mercy." (C. of F., Ch. XXI, Sec. 8.)

"The Sabbath is to be sanctified by a holy resting all that day, even from such worldly employments and recreations as are lawful on other days; and spending the whole time in the public and private exercises of God's worship, except so much as is to be taken up in the works of necessity and mercy." (Answer to Q. 60, Shorter Catechism.)

628. **Public worship on the Sabbath.** "It is the duty of all persons to remember the Lord's day, and to prepare for it before its approach. All wordly business should be so ordered, and seasonably laid aside, as that they may not be hindered thereby from sanctifying the Sabbath, as the Holy Scriptures require.

"The whole day is to be kept holy to the Lord, and to be used for worship and rest. It is requisite, therefore, that the people abstain from all unnecessary labor, and from recreations which are not in keeping with the sanctity of the day.

"Let the provisions for the support of the family on that day be so ordered that servants or others be not improperly detained from the public worship of God, nor hindered from sanctifying the Sabbath.

"Let every person and family, in the morning, by secret and private prayer, for themselves and others, especially for the assistance of God to their minister, and for a blessing upon His ministry, by reading the Scriptures, and by holy meditation, prepare for communion with God in His public ordinances." (B. Ch. O., par. 303-306.)

629. **Behavior before and during divine service.** "Let the people be careful to assemble at the appointed time, that all being present at the beginning they may unite with one heart in all the parts of pub-

lic worship, and let none unnecessarily depart until after the blessing be pronounced.

"Let the people, upon entering the church, take their seats in a decent, grave and reverent manner, and engage in a silent prayer for a blessing upon themselves, the minister, and all present, as well as upon those who are detained from the House of God.

"All who attend public worship are expected to be present in a spirit of reverence and godly fear, forbearing to engage in any conduct unbecoming to the place and occasion. It is highly important that children should be with their parents, that the members of a family should sit together in the House of God." (B. Ch. O., par. 307-309.)

630. **Reading the Holy Scriptures.** "The reading of the Holy Scriptures in the congregation is a part of the public worship of God, and should be done by the minister or some other authorized person.

"How large a portion should be read is left to the discretion of the minister, who should have regard to the time, that neither reading, singing, praying, preaching, nor any other ordinance be disproportionate the one to the other." (B. Ch. O., par. 310-311.)

631. **Singing of psalms and hymns.** "Praising God through the medium of music is a duty and a privilege. Therefore, the singing of hymns and psalms and the use of musical instruments should have an important part in public worship.

"In singing the praises of God, we are to sing in the spirit of worship, with understanding in our hearts. There should be a sufficient number of books to enable the whole congregation to join in this part of the worship.

"It is recommended that new hymns be used along with the old familiar hymns of the church, but that caution be observed in the selection of the newer hymns. Hymns should have the note of praise or be in accord with the spirit of the sermon.

"The leadership in song is left to the judgment of the Session, who should give careful thought to the character of those asked to lead in this part of worship, and the singing of a choir should not be allowed to displace congregational singing.

"The proportion of the time of public worship given to praise is left to the judgment of the minister, and the singing of psalms and hymns by the congregation should be encouraged." (B. Ch. O., par. 312-316.)

632. **Public prayer.** "It seems very proper to begin the public worship of the sanctuary with the doxology, followed by a short prayer, in which the minister, leading the people, shall ask for the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. It is appropriate that this prayer conclude with the Lord's Prayer in which all may unite.

"At some place in the service, before the sermon, there should be a comprehensive prayer, which should embrace some or all of the following elements: adoration; thanksgiving; confession of sin; supplication for pardon and peace with God through the blood of the atonement, with all the happy fruits thereof; pleading; intercession; and petition for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on all flesh, for all classes and conditions of men, for private citizens and public officials and for whatever else may seem to be necessary or suitable to the occasion.

"If there be a prayer after the sermon, it should ordinarily have relation to the subject that has been treated in the discourse; and all other public prayers should be appropriate to the occasion.

"Ministers are not to be confined to fixed forms of prayer for public worship, yet it is the duty of the minister, previous to entering upon his office, to prepare and qualify himself for this part of his work, as well as for preaching. He should, by a thorough acquaintance with the Holy Scriptures, by the study of the best writers on prayer, by meditation, and by a life of communion with God, endeavor to acquire both the spirit and the gift of prayer. Moreover, when he is to offer prayer in public worship, he should compose his spirit, and so order his thoughts that he may perform this duty with dignity and propriety, and with profit to the worshippers, lest he disgrace this important service by mean, irregular, slovenly or extravagant effusions." "The posture of the people in public prayer should always be reverent, and, as far as possible, uniform." (B. Ch. O., par. 317-321.)

633. **Preaching the Word in the divine service.** "The preaching of the Word is an ordinance of God for the salvation of men, and serious attention should be paid to the manner in which it is done. The minister should apply himself to it with diligence, and prove himself a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth.

"The purpose of a sermon is to set forth the teachings of Scripture and their proper application to the needs of the people. The text may consist of a longer or shorter passage of the Bible, as the judgment of the preacher may dictate. A text of Scripture should not be used merely as a motto.

"Preaching requires much study, meditation and prayer, and ministers should prepare their sermons with care, and not indulge themselves in loose, extemporary harangues, nor serve God with that which costs them naught. They should, however, keep to the simplicity of the Gospel and express themselves in language that can be understood by all. They should also by their lives adorn the Gospel which they preach, and be examples to believers in word and deed.

"As a primary design of public ordinances is to unite the people in acts of common worship of the most high God, ministers should be careful not to make their sermons so long as to interfere with or exclude the important duties of prayer and praise, but should preserve a just proportion in the several parts of public worship.

"After the sermon, the minister should ordinarily offer a prayer to Almighty God; then let a psalm or hymn be sung, and the congregation dismissed with the benediction.

"No person should be invited to preach in any of the churches under our care without the consent of the pastor or Session, unless sent by the Presbytery." (B. Ch. O., par. 322-327.)

634. **Offerings in the divine service.** "The Holy Scriptures teach that God is the owner of all persons and all things, and that we are but stewards of both life and possessions; that God's ownership and our stewardship should be acknowledged; that this acknowledgment should take the form, in part, of giving a worthy proportion of our income to the Church of Jesus Christ, thus worshipping the Lord with our possessions, and that the remainder should be used as becometh Christians.

"It is both a privilege and a duty, plainly enjoined in the Bible, to make regular, weekly, systematic and proportionate offerings for the support of religion and for the propagation of the Gospel in our own and foreign lands, and for the relief of the poor. This should be done as an exercise of grace and an act of worship, and at such time during the service as may be deemed expedient.

"The element of worship in Christian giving should be emphasized by a prayer of dedication at the time of the presentation of the offering." (B. Ch. O., par. 328-330.)

635. Warning against breaches of the Sabbath. "The fourth commandment forbiddeth the omission or careless performance of the duties required, and the profaning the day by idleness, or doing that which is in itself sinful, or by unnecessary thoughts, words or works about our worldly employments or recreations." (Answer to Q. 61, Shorter Catechism.)

"The Assembly faithfully admonishes all its pastors, officers and people against overt breaches of the Sabbath law ordained by the Lord Jesus Christ for all dispensations and times; and especially that it is their positive and personal duty to clear their own skirts of all complicity with these sins by refraining from all travel on Sabbath-breaking railroad trains, steamers, etc., and to refrain, as far as their knowledge may enable them, from committing to them any goods or commodities for transport on the Lord's day." (A. D. 1922, p. 817; M. G. A. 1878, p. 643.)

636. Discipline in case of infraction. "Sessions are directed to take notice of the violation of the Sabbath by members of the Church, and admonish and reprove them in the name of Christ; and if they persist in their infractions of the Fourth Commandment, that it be regarded as an offense demanding and justifying suspension." (A. D. 1922, p. 823; M. G. A. 1885, p. 413. Similar action taken in 1886, M. G. A., p. 52.)

637. Sunday amusements. "We recommend that our people continue their efforts to secure the closing of postoffices and carriers' windows on the Sabbath day, and that they use their influence as Christian citizens to have enforced all civil laws enacted for the purpose of making the Sabbath a rest day, such as the closing of places of business, drug stores, soda fountains and ice cream parlors, cigar stands, baseball games, etc., on the Sabbath, that the sanctity of our Sabbath may be preserved." (A. D. 1922, p. 827; M. G. A. 1912, p. 69.)

638. No official participation in civil legislation. "This Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, U. S., reaffirms its hearty sympathy with all proper and lawful efforts to protect the Sabbath, and it is enjoined upon our members constantly to hold for themselves, and to guarantee to all others their duties and rights in the Sabbath. But it is not the practice of our Church to participate officially in matters of civil legislation, the function of the Church, as the Body of Christ, being, in our belief, spiritual and not civil." (A. D. 1922, p. 829; M. G. A. 1921, p. 61.)

2. RELIGION IN THE HOME

639. Worshipping God in private. "Neither prayer, nor any other part of religious worship, is now, under the Gospel, either tied unto or made more acceptable by any place in which it is performed, or towards which it is directed: but God is to be worshipped everywhere in spirit and in truth; as in private families daily and in secret, each one by himself, so more solemnly in the public assemblies, which are not carelessly or willfully to be neglected or forsaken when God by His Word or providence calleth thereunto." (C. of F., Ch. XXI, Sec. 6.)

"In addition to public worship, it is the duty of each person in secret, and of every family in private, to worship God.

"Secret worship is most plainly enjoined by our Lord. In this duty every one, apart, is to spend some time in prayer, reading the Scriptures, holy meditation, and serious self-examination. The many advantages arising from a conscientious performance of these duties are best known to those who are found in the faithful discharge of them." (B. Ch. O., par. 380-381.)

640. Family worship. (See C. of F., Ch. XXI, Sec. 6, quoted above.)

"Family worship, which should be observed by every family, consists in prayer, reading the Scriptures, and singing praises, or in some briefer form of outspoken recognition of God." (B. Ch. O., par. 382.)

"The General Assembly repeats and emphasizes the following extract from the minutes of 1906: 'That all of our people who are heads of families be earnestly and affectionately exhorted to erect and maintain family altars, where God's richest blessing shall be invoked and vouchsafed to them and to their children. And that our pastors and Sessions make a thorough canvass of their congregations to ascertain the number of families that have family altars, and the number that have not, and report the same to their respective Presbyteries. And we warn parents against the danger and tendency of delegating the religious training of their children to Sunday schools, young people's societies, or any other agencies, all of which should be appreciated and improved as invaluable aids to parents, but not as substitutes for parental training.' " (A. D. 1922, p. 832; M. G. A. 1907, p. 36.)

641. Parental instruction. "Parents should instruct their children and servants in the Word of God, and in the principles of our holy religion. The reading of devotional literature should be encouraged and every proper opportunity should be embraced for religious instruction.

"Parents should set an example of piety and consistent living before the family. Unnecessary private visits on the Lord's day and indulgences in such practices injurious to the spiritual life of the family should be avoided.

"In the supreme task of religious education, parents should co-operate with the Church by setting their children an example in regular and punctual attendance upon the sessions of the Church school and the services of the sanctuary, by assisting them in the preparation of their lessons and by leading them in the consistent application of the teachings of the Gospel in their daily activities." (B. Ch. O., par. 383-385.)

642. **Absence of children from church.** "We earnestly call the attention of our people to the ominous absence of the children from the preaching service, and enjoin upon them to rebuild the ancient custom of the whole family sitting together in the family pew. We believe that the habit of young people going home after Sunday school, instead of staying for service, is a serious menace to the efficiency of the Church and the stability of the State, and calls for the most determined effort at reformation. The backbone of the State is a Sabbath-loving, church-going people, but such a people must be trained in childhood." (A. D. 1922, p. 833; M. G. A. 1919, p. 34.)

3. SACRAMENTS

643. **General statement.** "Sacraments are holy signs and seals of the covenant of grace, immediately instituted by God, to represent Christ and His benefits, and to confirm our interest in Him: as also to put a visible difference between those that belong unto the Church, and the rest of the world; and solemnly to engage them to the service of God in Christ according to His Word." (C. of F., Ch. XXVII, Sec. 1.)

(1) BAPTISM

644. **Baptism a sacrament.** "Baptism is a sacrament of the New Testament, ordained by Jesus Christ, not only for the solemn admission of the party bap-

tized into the visible Church, but also to be unto him a sign and seal of the covenant of grace, of his ingrafting into Christ, of regeneration, of remission of sins, and of his giving up unto God, through Jesus Christ, to walk in newness of life: which sacrament is, by Christ's own appointment, to be continued in His Church until the end of the world." (C. of F., Ch. XXVIII, Sec. 1.)

645. **Outward element and its significance.** "The outward element to be used in this sacrament is water, wherewith the party is to be baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, by a minister of the Gospel, lawfully called thereunto." (C. of F., Ch. XXVIII, Sec. 2.)

646. **Meaning of ordinance.** "Baptism is a sacrament, wherein the washing with water, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, doth signify and seal our ingrafting into Christ, and partaking of the benefits of the covenant of grace, and our engagement to be the Lord's." (Answer to Q. 94, Shorter Catechism.)

647. **Efficacy due to work of Holy Ghost.** "The efficacy of baptism is not tied to that moment of time wherein it is administered; yet, notwithstanding, by the right use of this ordinance the grace promised is not only offered, but really exhibited and conferred by the Holy Ghost, to such (whether of age or infants) as that grace belongeth unto, according to the counsel of God's own will, in His appointed time." (C. of F., Ch. XXVIII, Sec. 6.)

648. **Persons who may be baptized.** "Not only those that do actually profess faith in, and obedience unto Christ, but also the infants of one or both believing parents are to be baptized." (C. of F., Ch. XXVIII, Sec. 4.)

"Baptism is not to be administered to any that are out of the visible Church till they profess their faith in Christ, and obedience to Him; but the infants of such as are members of the visible Church are to be baptized." (Answer to Q. 95, Shorter Catechism.)

649. Infant baptism. *Duty of parents to dedicate their children in baptism.*

"It is the duty and privilege of parents to dedicate their children to God in baptism, thereby claiming God's covenant promises to parents and children.

"Baptism is not to be unnecessarily delayed, nor to be administered in any case by any private person, but by a minister of Christ, called to be the steward of the mysteries of God.

"Baptism is ordinarily to be administered in the church in the presence of the congregation; yet there may be occasions when it is expedient to administer this ordinance elsewhere, of which the minister is to be the judge." (B. Ch. O., par. 343-345.)

Procedure in the administration of infant baptism:

650. (a) Previous notice to be given. "After previous notice is given to the minister, the child to be baptized is to be presented, by one or both parents or some other responsible person, signifying the desire that the child be baptized." (B. Ch. O., par. 346.)

651. (b) Statement by minister. "Before baptism, let the minister use some words of instruction respecting the institution, nature, use and ends of this ordinance, showing:

"That it is instituted by Christ; that it is a seal of the righteousness of faith; that the seed of the faithful have no less a right to this ordinance, under the Gospel, than the seed of Abraham to circumcision, under the Old Testament; that Christ commanded all nations to be baptized; that He blessed little children, declaring that of such is the Kingdom of Heaven; that the promise of the Gospel is to the believer and his house; that household baptism was practiced by the apostles; that we are, by nature, sinful, guilty and polluted, and have need of cleansing by the blood of Christ, and by the sanctifying influence of the Spirit of God.

"The minister is also to exhort the parents to the careful performance of their duty, requiring that they teach the child to read the Word of God; that they instruct it in the principles of our holy religion, as contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, an excellent summary of which we have in the Confession of Faith and in the Larger and Shorter Catechisms of the Westminster Assembly, which are to be recommended to them, as adopted by the Church, for their direction and assistance, in the discharge of this important duty; that they pray with and for it; that they set an example of piety and godliness before it; and endeavor by all the means of God's appointment to bring up their child in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." (B. Ch. O., par. 347.)

652. **(c) Questions proposed by minister.** "The minister may then propose the following or like questions:

"(1) Do you acknowledge your child's need of the cleansing blood of Jesus Christ and the renewing grace of the Holy Spirit?

"(2) Do you claim God's covenant promises in (his) behalf, and do you look in faith to the Lord Jesus Christ for (his) salvation, as you do for your own?

"(3) Do you now unreservedly dedicate your child to God, and promise in humble reliance upon divine grace that you will endeavor to set before (him) a godly example; that you will pray with and for (him); that you will teach (him) the doctrines of our holy religion, and that you will strive by all the means of

God's appointment to bring (him) up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord?" (B. Ch. O., par. 348.)

653. **(d) Baptismal formula.** "Then the minister is to pray for a blessing to attend this ordinance, after which, calling the child by name, he shall say:

" 'I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.'

"As he pronounces these words, he is to baptize the child with water, by pouring or sprinkling it on the head of the child, without adding any other ceremony; and the whole shall be concluded with prayer." (B. Ch. O., par. 349.)

654. **Mode of baptism.** "Our Confession of Faith teaches that 'dipping of the person into water is not necessary, but baptism is rightly administered by pouring or sprinkling water upon the person,' and our directory prescribes 'pouring or sprinkling water on the face of the child without adding any other ceremony.' This Assembly judges that for a Presbyterian minister to baptize by immersion is such a departure from the ways approved in our Standards as should be discouraged." (A. D. 1922, p. 838; M. G. A. 1872, p. 167.)

655. **Ministers only to administer baptism.** "There be only two sacraments ordained by Christ our Lord in the Gospel; that is to say, baptism and the supper of the Lord, neither of which may be dispensed by any but by a minister of the Word, lawfully ordained." (C. of F., Ch. XXVII, Sec. 4.)

656. **Baptismal formula changed.** The baptismal formula in the Directory of Worship was restored to its original form, and is as follows: "I baptize thee *in* the name" instead of "*into* the name." (A. D. 1922, p. 15; M. G. A. 1899, p. 434.)

657. **Romish baptism.** "The Session of the Presbyterian Church in Anderson, South Carolina, respect-

fully petition the General Assembly to pass a deliverance on the validity of Romish baptism."

"We recommend that the General Assembly, as its answer, reaffirm the action of the General Assembly of 1871 (printed Minutes, page 30), viz.:

" 'Our Church has always held, agreeably to Scripture, that the administration of baptism may present irregularities or imperfections which are not to be approved, but the sacrament may still have substantial validity. It is plain from the Scriptures that baptism has, by the Lord Jesus Christ, been given to His true visible church catholic, and cannot be out of her pale.

" 'The administration of this sacrament may, in two ways, be invalidated: either by the apostasy of the body wherein it is exercised, so that this society is no true part of Christ's visible church, or by the utter change or corruption of the element and doctrine of the sacrament. And our Assemblies have correctly held that the form called by the Popish communion 'Christian baptism' has ceased for both reasons to be valid, because that society is declared in Scripture to be anti-christ, and Babylon, and apostate, out of which the Lord requireth His 'people to come, that they may not be partakers of her plagues,' and because she hath, with superstitious design, substituted a mixed element in place of water, which Christ ordained to be used as the emblem, and hath utterly corrupted the doctrine of holy baptism into an incantation working ex opere operato. (See sections on 'Baptism not a Burial,' p. 835, and 'Valid Baptism,' p. 842.)' "

(A. D. 1922, p. 839; M. G. A. 1884, p. 206. Similar action, M. G. A. 1909, p. 48.)

658. Immersion not Scriptural but valid. "Baptism by immersion is not scriptural as to its mode; but the irregularity of this unscriptural mode does not invalidate the sacred ordinance, and persons who have been baptized by immersion, by the authority of an evangelical church, are not required to be rebaptized by the scriptural mode of sprinkling or pouring when received into the communion of our Church." (A. D. 1922, p. 838; M. G. A. 1894, p. 197.)

659. **Campbellite and Unitarian baptism.** "The principles set forth in the deliverance of the General Assembly of 1814, concerning the baptism of Unitarians, and in the deliverance of the General Assembly of 1845 concerning Popish baptism (see Baird's Digest, Book III, Secs. 12, 13, pp. 102, 103), necessarily imply the invalidity of baptism as administered by ministers commonly known as Campbellites; and persons so baptized only by ministers of that body, coming into our connection, should invariably be baptized before being admitted to the Lord's Table." (A. D. 1922, p. 839; M. G. A. 1870, p. 536.)

660. **Invalid baptism.** "Baptism performed by a minister of any church which is not an evangelical branch of the Church of Christ is not valid." (A. D. 1922, p. 840; M. G. A. 1894, p. 197.)

(2) THE LORD'S SUPPER

661. **General statement.** "Our Lord Jesus, in the night wherein He was betrayed, instituted the sacrament of His body and blood, called the Lord's Supper, to be observed in His Church, unto the end of the world; for the perpetual remembrance of the sacrifice of Himself in His death, the sealing all benefits thereof unto true believers, their spiritual nourishment and growth in Him, their further engagement in and to all duties which they owe unto Him; and to be a bond and pledge of their communion with Him, and with each other, as members of His mystical body." (C. of F., Ch. XXIX, Sec. 1.)

662. Difference from Popish sacrifice of mass. "In this sacrament, Christ is not offered up to His Father, nor any real sacrifice made at all for remission of sins of the quick or dead, but only a commemoration of that one offering up of Himself, by Himself, upon the cross, once for all, and a spiritual oblation of all possible praise unto God for the same; so that the Popish sacrifice of the mass, as they call it, is most abominably injurious to Christ's one only sacrifice, the alone propitiation for all the sins of the elect." (C. of F., Ch. XXIX, Sec. 2.)

663. Ministers to administer it. "The Lord Jesus hath, in this ordinance, appointed His ministers to declare His word of institution to the people, to pray and bless the elements of bread and wine, and thereby to set them apart from a common to an holy use; and to take and break the bread, to take the cup, and (they communicating also themselves) to give both to the communicants; but to none who are not then present in the congregation." (C. of F., Ch. XXIX, Sec. 3.)

664. The outward elements. "The outward elements in this sacrament, duly set apart to the uses ordained by Christ, hath such relations to Him crucified, as that truly, yet sacramentally only, they are sometimes called by the name of the things they represent, to wit, the body and blood of Christ; albeit, in substance and nature, they still remain truly, and only, bread and wine, as they were before." (C. of F., Ch. XXIX, Sec. 5.)

665. Elements to be used. "It is not competent for a church Session to elect what elements shall be used to typify the shed blood of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. The Lord has indicated bread and wine as the proper elements." (A. D. 1922, p. 834; M. G. A. 1898, p. 218.)

In answer to an overture from the First Presbyterian Church, Savannah, Georgia, asking, "Has the Session of an individual church the right by a majority vote to choose between fermented and unfermented wine," the Assembly replied in the affirmative. (M. G. A. 1914, p. 42.)

"The ad interim committee to which was referred an overture relating to communion wine, reports that, after careful consideration of the whole subject, it is the judgment of the commitee that the actions of previous General Assemblies meet all the needs of the case, providing ample liberty for any Session to be guided by its own interpretation of the Scriptures in this matter." (M. G. A. 1916, p. 26.)

666. The nature of the sacrament. "That doctrine which maintains a change of the substance of bread and wine into the substance of Christ's body and blood (commonly called transubstantiation) by consecration of a priest, or by any other way, is repugnant, not to Scripture alone, but even to common sense and reason; overthroweth the nature of the sacrament; and hath been and is the cause of manifold superstitions, yea of gross idolatries." (C. of F., Ch. XXIX, Sec. 6.)

"The Lord's Supper is a sacrament wherein, by giving and receiving bread and wine, according to Christ's appointment, His death is showed forth; and the worthy receivers are, not after a corporal and carnal manner, but by faith, made partakers of His body and blood, with all His benefits, to their spiritual nourishment and growth in grace." (Answer to Q. 96, Shorter Catechism.)

667. Benefits to the believer. "Worthy receivers, outwardly partaking of the visible elements in this sacrament, do then also inwardly by faith, really and indeed, yet not carnally and corporally, but spiritually, receive and feed upon Christ crucified, and all benefits of His death: the body and blood of Christ being then not corporally or carnally in, with, or under the bread and wine; yet as really, but spiritually, present to the faith of believers in that ordinance, as the elements themselves are, to their outward senses." (C. of F., Ch. XXIX, Sec. 7.)

"It is required of them that would worthily partake of the Lord's Supper, that they examine themselves, of their knowledge to discern the Lord's body, of their faith to feed upon Him, of their repentance, love and new obedience; lest coming unworthily, they eat and drink judgment to themselves." (Answer to Q. 97, Shorter Catechism.)

668. **Assistance by deacons in distribution.** "Touching the distribution of the elements of the Lord's Supper by others than elders, we recommend that the Assembly reply that under the conditions specified it is permissible that the help of deacons or of worthy members be employed." (A. D. 1922, p. 835; M. G. A. 1910, p. 67.)

669. **Frequency of celebration.** "The communion, or Supper of the Lord, is to be celebrated frequently; the stated times to be determined by the Session of each congregation, as it may judge most for edification." (B. Ch. O., par. 356.)

670. **Preparation suggested.** "Public notice should be given to the congregation, at least the Sabbath before the administration of this ordinance, and either then, or on some day of the week, the people should be instructed in its nature and urged to make due preparation for it, that all may come in a suitable manner to this holy feast." (B. Ch. O., par. 357.)

671. **Statement by minister.** "When the time for the administration of the sacrament has come, the minister shall show:

"That this is an ordinance of Christ; by reading the words of institution, either from one of the evangelists or from I Corinthians XI, which, as to him may appear expedient, he may explain and apply; that it is to be observed in remembrance of Christ, to show forth His death till He come; that it is of inestimable benefit to strengthen His people against sin, to support them under troubles, to encourage and quicken them in duty, to inspire them with love and zeal, to increase their faith and holy resolution, and to beget peace of conscience and comfortable hopes of eternal life.

"He shall invite to partake of the sacrament all those who repenting of their sins, and trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation, desire to live as becometh followers of Christ.

"Since, by our Lord's appointment, this sacrament sets forth the communion of believers, the minister, before the celebration begins, should invite all those who are communicants in good standing in any evangelical church to participate in the sacrament." (B. Ch. O., par. 358.)

672. Distribution of the elements. "The table on which the elements are placed and properly covered being furnished with bread and wine, the communicants orderly and gravely assembled, the elders together in a convenient place; the minister should then set the elements apart by prayer and thanksgiving.

"The bread and wine being thus set apart by prayer and thanksgiving, the minister is to take the bread and break it in the view of the people, saying:

" 'Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the same night in which He was betrayed, having taken bread and blessed and broken it, gave it to His disciples; as I, ministering in His name, give this bread unto you; saying' (here the bread is to be distributed), 'Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of Me.'

"After having given the bread, he shall take the cup, and say:

" 'After the same manner our Saviour also took the cup, and having given thanks, as hath been done in His name, He gave it to the disciples, saying' (while the minister is repeating these words, let him give the cup), 'This cup is the New Testament in my blood, which is shed for many, for the remission of sins: drink all ye of it.'

"It is recommended that the minister be served before the people, and that he serve the elders after they have served the people." (B. Ch. O., par. 359.)

673. Behavior during period of celebration. "Since believers are to act personally in all their covenanting with the Lord, it is proper that a part of the time occupied in the distribution of the elements should be spent by all in silent communion, thanksgiving, intercession and prayer." (B. Ch. O., par. 360.)

674. Dismission. "After a prayer of thanksgiving, let a psalm or hymn be sung and the congregation dismissed with some gospel benediction." (B. Ch. O., par. 361.)

675. Offering. "An offering for the poor, or other sacred purpose, is appropriate in connection with this service, and may be made at such time as shall be ordered by the Session." (B. Ch. O., par. 362.)

CHAPTER XXXV

TOPICS MORAL AND SECULAR

1. WORLDLY AMUSEMENTS

676. General statement. "For the promotion of the spiritual well-being of the Church, the General Assembly feels constrained to address all our people a few words of instruction and advice on the importance of abstaining from such amusements as are destructive of or unfavorable to the religious life of the Christian.

"Under the term 'worldly amusements' may be included the dance, the theatre, and the card table. There is dancing which is innocent in itself; there are plays that are not immoral, and card-playing without gambling cannot be called a sin. There are also dances, stage plays and games of cards that are in themselves harmful and contrary to the law of God, and such being evil, and only evil, are condemned and forbidden by the Church. On these matters the Church, through its constitution, the deliverance of its courts, and from its pulpits, has spoken in the strongest terms.

"The question then arises, May not Christians freely indulge in such forms of worldly amusements as are not sinful in themselves? In reply, the General Assembly urges our people to abstain altogether from the amusements referred to, as a matter of Christian prudence, example, and out of regard for the honor of Christ, because:

"1. These things are accounted worldly and are regarded as characteristic of a worldly, as distinguished from a spiritual, life. Christians cannot afford to do those things which are looked upon as belonging peculiarly to the world, and by doing which the line of separation between the world and the Church is erased or obscured. 'Come ye out from among them, and be ye separate, O my people, saith the Lord.'

"2. Experience shows that persons engaging in worldly amusements are easily led into such indulgences as are wrong in themselves. Entering into these things, it is difficult to stop within the bounds of prudence, and under their fascination and the influence of worldly surroundings many are led into sin and become alienated from God, to the ruin of their souls. Those who dance at all are in danger of being led into dances that are improper. Those who attend the theatre are likely to witness and take pleasure in things which are evil; and card-playing has led many a person to gambling, which is one of the most fatal of all vices.

"3. Worldly amusements, and the company into which they often bring those engaged in them, are not favorable to growth in grace, and a loving service of God and the Church. It cannot be denied that those who indulge in worldly amusements do not become eminent for piety, do not hunger and thirst after righteousness, and do not excel in Christian work. It is touching such matters as these, not things evil in themselves only, but also things considered evil, or associated with evil, that Christians must practice self-denial, and live lives which will mark them as separate from the world. Those things are not 'expedient' which draw the soul away from communion with God, and from the greatest efficiency in His holy Church.

"Be Christians in earnest. Let the dear, sad, glorious cross of Christ overshadow all your life. Never get beyond its chastening presence, and let its precious sacrifice be the model and inspiration of all you do." (A. D. 1922, pp. 851-852; M. G. A. 1900, p. 626.)

A similar letter was prepared and sent to pastors and churches. (See Assembly Minutes 1911, pp. 44, 46; 1912, p. 19.)

Pastors were requested to preach on the subject at least once during the ensuing year. (A. D. 1922, p. 853; M. G. A. 1911, p. 44.)

677. Fashionable amusements and recreations. "It is the duty of every judicatory to enforce the teachings of our Standards on this and other fashionable amusements, such as theatrical performances, card-playing, etc. And while the Assembly believes that the 'lascivious dancings' declared to be forbidden in the Seventh Commandment, by the answer to the 139th question of the Larger Catechism are not those usual in our best society, yet it is our belief that the tenor of the teachings of the Scriptures and of our Standards is in direct opposition to this social usage. Christ's Kingdom is not of this world, and the apostle exhorts Christians not to be conformed to the world. Though we do not say that all these worldly amusements are 'in their own nature sinful,' it is clear that they 'may tempt' those who engage in them, and others, to sin; and, moreover, the Scriptures condemn them as worldliness . . . In this connection, the Assembly would take occasion to exhort our Christian people to avoid the excesses into which they are in danger of being drawn by the demands of fashion. The Scriptures forbid 'revellings' and all intemperate self-indulgence, with which teachings the prevalent custom of protracting social assemblies, with or without music and dancing, to the hours of the morning, but especially when accompanied with drinking and card-playing, is manifestly inconsistent. Moreover, the Assembly, observing that parties of pleasure are usually composed almost exclusively of unmarried young people, would give it as its earnest advice that the best form of social reunion be made to partake as much as possible of the style and tone of the family circle, in which youthful enjoyment is tempered by the presence of the older and married members.

"The Assembly expresses itself with the more earnestness on this whole subject because of the disposition which is observed in all parts of our borders to run into the inordinate indulgence of worldliness at this time, in forgetfulness of the mighty chastenings of God which are even yet upon us, and because we see members of our churches and our beloved baptized youth, in forgetfulness of the covenant of God which is upon them, carried away with the world's delusions, to the subversion of the divine influences of the sanctuary, and to the neglect of the interests of their souls. Wherefore, the Assembly would urge our people to take the word of exhortation, to abstain from all forms of evil, and to study and pursue that sobriety which becometh the Gospel, so that the Church of Christ shall indeed be 'a peculiar people.'

"And we hereby exhort our ministers and church Sessions to a discharge of their duties. Let them proceed, by affectionate and faithful instruction from the pulpit, as well as in private, by admonition and by such other measures as Christian prudence may dictate; but when all other means fail, then let them proceed to such methods of discipline as shall separate from the church those who love the world and practice conformity thereto, rather than to the law of Christ." (A. D. 1922, pp. 850, 851; M. G. A. 1865, p. 361.)

678. **Discipline to be enforced against certain offenses.** "The Assembly would earnestly and solemnly enjoin upon all the Sessions and Presbyteries under its care the absolute necessity of enforcing 'the discipline provided in our constitution against offenses,' under the word offenses, including attendance by our

members upon theatrical exhibitions and performances and promiscuous dancings; against intemperance and against availing themselves of the 'expedients for evading pecuniary obligations now permitted by the legislation of the country,' in such a manner as cannot be justified by a conscience enlightened by the Spirit and the Word of God, and as must dishonor the cause of Jesus Christ." (A. D. 1922, p. 853; M. G. A. 1869, p. 390.)

"The extent of the mischief done depends largely upon circumstances. The church Session is, therefore, the only court competent to judge what remedy to apply; but the Assembly being persuaded that, in most cases, it is the result of thoughtlessness or ignorance, recommends great patience in dealing with those who offend in this way." (A. D. 1922, p. 854; M. G. A. 1877, p. 411.)

679. **Amusements to be avoided.** "All amusements evil in themselves are to be avoided, of course, and amusements that are innocent in themselves may become evil through excess, and it is the duty of the Session, in the exercise of its constitutional powers, to warn their young people against such; but nothing is to be considered an offense 'which cannot be proved to be such' from Scripture, as interpreted in our Standards." (A. D. 1922, p. 853; M. G. A. 1916, p. 73.)

680. **All past deliverances reaffirmed.** "All past deliverances of the Assembly on the question of worldly amusements are hereby reaffirmed, and all pastors and Sessions are requested to call the special attention of their churches to this action." (A. D. 1922, p. 856; M. G. A. 1921, p. 65.)

2. INTEMPERANCE

681. **Deliverances on intemperance.** "Our Church, in accordance with her former deliverances on the

subject of temperance, made in 1830, 1834, 1837 and 1848, bears her testimony against the traffic in intoxicating liquors as a fruitful source of abounding iniquity and misery. And the Assembly would urge our people to use all means which may be approved by their Christian conscience and judgment to remedy this evil throughout the land. Especially would we urge our members to abstain from the use of intoxicating liquors as a beverage." (A. D. 1922, p. 858; M. G. A. 1891, p. 244.)

"*Whereas*, we recognize the liquor traffic as an aggressive enemy to the home, the Church and the State, an alarming menace to the Christian Sabbath, and a powerful obstacle to the work of establishing Christ's Kingdom in foreign lands; and

"*Whereas*, 'sin is any want of conformity unto or transgression of the law of God,' and a failure to manifest disapproval of or opposition to a prevailing evil is a sin of omission, therefore,

"*Resolved*, That we reaffirm the deliverance and testimony of our Church made in 1891 on the subject of temperance, the liquor traffic and abstinence from intoxicants as a beverage, and we bear our testimony against the establishing and promoting of the traffic in intoxicating liquors as the fruitful source of sin, crime and misery." (A. D. 1922, p. 858; M. G. A. 1892, p. 462.)

3. ATTITUDE TOWARDS PROHIBITION

682. Resolution. "*Resolved*, That in the action by the Assembly in adopting the report of the Committee on Bills and Overtures in reply to a communication from the Executive Committee of the Prohibition Party of North Carolina, this Assembly is not to be construed as intending to commit the Church to the political theory of prohibition, either pro or con." (A. D. 1922, p. 859; M. G. A. 1897, p. 19.)

683. **National constitutional prohibition.** "*Resolved,* That we are in hearty favor of national constitutional prohibition, and will do all properly within our power to secure the adoption of an amendment to the constitution forever prohibiting the sale, manufacture for sale, transportation for sale, importation for sale, and exportation for sale of intoxicating liquors for beverage purposes in the United States." (M. G. A. 1914, p. 71.)

4. MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE

684. **Marriage: A divine institution.** "Marriage is a divine institution, though not a sacrament, nor peculiar to the Church of Christ. It is proper that every commonwealth, for the good of society, make laws to regulate marriage, which all citizens are bound to obey." (B. Ch. O., par. 355.)

685. **Christians to marry in the Lord.** "Christians ought to marry in the Lord; therefore, it is fit that their marriage be solemnized by a lawful minister, that special instruction may be given them, and suitable prayers made when they enter into this relation." (B. Ch. O., par. 356.)

686. **Marry in the Lord.** "It is lawful for all sorts of people to marry who are able, with judgment, to give their consent, yet it is the duty of Christians to marry only in the Lord. And, therefore, such as profess the true reformed religion should not marry with infidels, Papists or other idolaters; neither should such as are godly be unequally yoked, by marrying with such as are notoriously wicked in their life, or maintain damnable heresies." (C. of F., Ch. XXIV, Sec. 3.)

687. **Marriage between one man and one woman.** "Marriage is to be between one man and one woman;

neither is it lawful for any man to have more than one wife, nor for any woman to have more than one husband at the same time." (C. of F., Ch. XXIV, Sec. 1.) "Marriage is to be between one man and one woman only." (B. Ch. O., par. 357.)

688. **Objects of marriage.** "Marriage was ordained for the mutual help of husband and wife; for the increase of mankind with a legitimate issue, and of the Church with an holy seed, and for preventing of uncleanness." (C. of F., Ch. XXIV, Sec. 2.)

689. **Age of marriage.** "The parties ought to be of such years of discretion as to be capable of making their own choice; and if they be under age, or live with their parents, the consent of the parents or others under whose care they are ought to be previously obtained, and well certified to the minister before he proceeds to solemnize the marriage." (B. Ch. O., par. 358.)

690. **Duty of parents.** "Parents ought neither to compel their children to marry contrary to their inclinations, nor deny their consent without just and important reasons." (B. Ch. O., par. 359.)

691. **Marriage of a public nature.** "Marriage is of a public nature. The welfare of civil society, the happiness of families and the credit of religion are deeply interested in it. Therefore, the purpose of marriage ought to be sufficiently published a proper time previously to the solemnization of it. It is enjoined on all ministers to be careful that, in this matter, they neither transgress the laws of God nor the laws of the community; and that they may not destroy the peace and comfort of families, they must be properly certified with respect to the parties applying to them, that no just objections lie against their marriage." (B. Ch. O., par. 360.)

692. Limitations of marriage. "Marriage ought not to be within the degrees of consanguinity or affinity forbidden in the Word; nor can such incestuous marriages ever be made lawful by any law of man, or consent of parties, so as those persons may live together as man and wife." (C. of F., Ch. XXIV, Sec. 4.)

693. Proper registers of marriages. "Let the minister keep a proper register for the names of all persons whom he marries, and of the time of their marriage, for the perusal of all whom it may concern." (B. Ch. O., par. 362.)

694. Theories of marriage. "There are four theories as to the nature of marriage: (1) The sacramentarian, or ecclesiastical; (2) the contractual, or civil; (3) The mixed, or ecclesiastico-civil; (4) The natural or divine.

"1. According to the first, or sacramentarian, theory, marriage is a religious ordinance, and the family is an ecclesiastical institution. Consequently, its making and unmaking fall exclusively within the jurisdiction of the Church, as do the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Its whole regulation is a matter of ecclesiastical law. We must go to Church creeds and canons to learn what is lawful concerning it.

"2. According to the second, or contractual, theory, marriage is a civil ordinance, and the family a social institute. Consequently, its making and unmaking fall exclusively within the jurisdiction of the State; its entire regulation is a matter of civil law; we must go to civil institutions and statutes to learn what is lawful and right concerning it.

"3. According to the third, or mixed, theory, marriage is both an ecclesiastical and civil ordinance, and the family is both an ecclesiastical and civil institution; its entire regulation is a matter for both ecclesiastical and civil law. It falls within the joint jurisdiction of Church and State. We must go to both to learn what is lawful and right concerning it.

"4. According to the fourth, or divine, theory, marriage is an ordinance of God, and the family is a divine institution. Consequently, it falls exclusively within the jurisdiction of the Deity; its regulation is a matter of divine legislation only; we must go to the Bible to learn what is right and proper concerning it.

"That the fourth, or divine, theory, is the correct one is proved by the following considerations:

"(1) God created the race male and female, that the relation of husband and wife might be possible.

"(2) He created Adam and Eve and related them to each other as husband and wife.

"(3) The Scriptures teach us that it was God who 'set the solitary in families.'

"(4) In His Word, God has specifically legislated concerning marriage and the formation of the family.

"As the family is thus an original and natural institution of divine constitution, it is related to those other divine institutions, the State and the Church; neither can lawfully originate legislation concerning marriage; each must take the responsibility of interpreting and applying God's marriage laws within its own sphere and for its own purposes; each must protect itself by the powers of discipline lodged in its hands."

695. "The divine marriage law. There have been five statements, or restatements, or interpretations of God's marriage law as promulgated in the Scriptures: (1) The Edenic; (2) The Mosaic; (3) The Christian; (4) The Pharisaic; (5) The Pauline. We give only two of these.

"(3) *The Christian law.* When our Lord came He restated the marriage law of God in His Sermon on the Mount in these words: 'Whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is divorced committeth adultery.' (Matt. 5:32; Luke 16:18.) This statement of our Lord exactly coincides with the law of Moses: (1) It approves monogamy; (2) It allows divorce upon the ground of uncleanness; (3) It denies the right of remarriage to the guilty party.

"(5) *The Pauline law.* Paul gave an interpretation of the marriage law which is thought by some to be inconsistent with that of Moses and Christ: 'Let not the wife depart from her husband; but if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife . . . But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such a case.' (I Cor. 7:11, 15.)

"There is no inconsistency here. Moses spake of a man 'sending his wife out of his house,' and said no man could lawfully do that except for the sin of 'uncleanness.' Our Lord spake of a man 'putting away' his wife, and declared that that could be lawfully done only for the cause of 'fornication.' Paul spoke of the brother or sister who 'departs,' goes out of the house of his own volition or choice, voluntarily abandons his partner. When a brother or sister thus willfully and incurably deserts his mate, the deserted is free from the marriage bonds, but the guilty deserter is not permitted to remarry: 'if she depart, let her remain unmarried.'" (A. D. 1922, pp. 870-873; M. G. A. 1912, pp. 28, 29.)

LATEST DELIVERANCE ON MARRIAGE

REPORT OF SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO CONSIDER THE REPORT OF THE AD-INTERIM COMMITTEE ON DIVORCE

"No subject has, perhaps, more frequently come before the Assembly than that of marriage and divorce. The Assembly ruled upon it in 1898, 1900, 1903, and in 1909 an ad-interim committee of five was appointed. The following year the committee was enlarged by the addition of Dr. R. A. Webb, Dr. W. T. Hall and Dr. T. R. Sampson. This enlarged committee asked for a continuance in 1911, and in 1912, three years after the beginning of its studies, made an exhaustive report, closing with the following recommendation: 'We recommend that the Assembly answer the overtures asking for a revision of the XXIV Chapter of the Confession of Faith in the negative, for the reason that it is a sufficiently full and accurate exposition of the Bible doctrine of marriage and divorce.'

"Chapter XXIV, Section 6, reads as follows: 'Although the corruption of man be such as is apt to study arguments unduly to put asunder those whom God hath joined together in marriage, yet nothing but adultery, or such willful desertion as can no way be remedied by the church or civil magistrate, is cause sufficient of dissolving the bond of marriage, wherein a public and orderly course of proceeding is to be observed, and the persons concerned in it not left to their own wills and discretion in their own case.'

"The majority report of the present ad-interim committee makes the following recommendations:

(1) 'We hold that marriage is a holy estate, ordained of God, a sacred relationship, which is to be held in honor by all, and we deeply deplore the increasing disregard of the sanctity of the marriage tie.

(2) 'We enjoin our pastors to give training for marriage a conspicuous place in their programs, to instruct their people regularly and systematically in the meaning and responsibilities of marriage, and to seek to maintain among them a Christian conscience with regard to divorce.

(3) 'We remind our ministers that, in performing a marriage ceremony, they must comply with every civil requirement, but that they are chiefly accountable to God, and that, therefore, they have a right to refuse to perform any marriage which in their judgment has not the divine sanction.

(4) 'We hold, with respect to divorce, that marriage according to the divine ideal is indissoluble, and is normally terminated only by death.

(5) 'We recognize the violation of the Seventh Commandment is the only unquestionable ground for divorce. Therefore, we recommend that Chapter XXIV, Section 6, of the Confession of Faith, be amended by striking out the words, 'or such willful desertion as can no way be remedied by the church or civil magistrate.'

"It is the recommendation of your special committee that these recommendations of the majority report of the ad-interim committee be adopted, with the exception of the last one, or number five, which recommends a revision of the Confession of Faith on this subject." (M. G. A. 1929, p. 42.)

696. Grounds of divorce. "Adultery or fornication, committed after a contract, being detected before marriage, giveth just occasion to the innocent party to dissolve that contract. In the case of adultery after marriage, it is lawful for the innocent party to sue out a divorce, and after the divorce to marry another, as if the offending party were dead." (C. of F., Ch. XXIV, Sec. 5.)

697. Caution in pleading grounds of divorce. "Although the corruption of man be such as is apt to study arguments, unduly to put asunder those whom God hath joined together in marriage; yet nothing but adultery, or such willful desertion as can no way be remedied by the Church or civil magistrate, is cause sufficient of dissolving the bond of marriage: wherein a public and orderly course of proceeding is to be observed and the persons concerned in it not left to their own wills and discretion in their own case." (C. of F., Ch. XXIV, Sec. 6.)

5. EVOLUTION

698. Deliverance reaffirmed. The General Assembly in 1924 reaffirmed a former deliverance on evolution to the following effect:

"*Whereas,* The General Assembly of our Church has declared itself upon the question of evolution in the following deliverance:

" 'The Church remains at this time sincerely convinced that the Scriptures as truly and authoritatively expounded in our Confession of Faith and Catechisms teach:

" 'That Adam and Eve were created body and soul by immediate acts of Almighty power, thereby preserving a perfect race unity.

" 'That Adam's body was directly fashioned by Almighty God without any natural animal parentage of any kind out of matter previously created from nothing, and that any doctrine at variance therewith is a dangerous error, inasmuch as in the methods of interpreting Scripture it must demand, and in the consequences which by fair implication it will involve, it will lead to the denial of doctrines fundamental to the faith.' (A. D. 1910, p. 492; M. G. A. 1886, p. 8.)

"The Presbytery of Mecklenburg respectfully overtures the General Assembly to reaffirm the above deliverance and to publish it to the world as our present position. We recommend an affirmative answer, and do so reaffirm our convictions and do hereby publish them to the world." (M. G. A. 1924, p. 64.)

6. YOUNG WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION

699. Deliverance. The following deliverance was adopted in 1925:

"In response to the overture from the Presbytery of Savannah asking the Assembly to protest against change of basis of membership by Y. W. C. A., the Assembly hereby expresses the hope that the Y. W. C. A. will continue to maintain the evangelical basis of membership which means that active membership in the Association is based on membership in one of the evangelical churches upon which it has secured so large a measure of public and Christian confidence, and would most earnestly protest against any change that would mean to repudiate full loyalty to Jesus as the divine and only Lord and Saviour of lost sinners." (M. G. A. 1925, p. 68.)

7. YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION

700. Endorsement in army and navy. The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States put on record their cordial endorsement of the great work being done in our army and navy by the Young Men's Christian Association, and commend it to the generous support of our people. (A. D. 1922, p. 815; M. G. A. 1918, p. 53.)

8. CHAPLAINS

701. Funds given. The Assembly, out of funds contributed for Protestant relief in Europe, has for a number of years made a grant of three hundred dollars to each chaplain in the army and the navy whose membership was in the Presbyterian Church. (M. G. A. 1927, p. 41.)

9. WAR

702. Resolution adopted. "*Resolved,* That the Assembly put itself on record as favoring every worthy effort to secure the peace of the world." (M. G. A. 1925, p. 95.)

10. INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND GOOD-WILL

703. Deliverance. "But while we believe in peace, good-will and love between man and man, nation and nation, and race and race, throughout the world; while we believe that war is a curse and absolutely out of harmony with the Christian religion, whose heart is love; and while we hope, work and pray for the coming of the day when 'men shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks and the nations shall learn war no more,' still we cannot approve the methods recommended to us by the (Federal) Council, though we aim at the same glorious end.

"We believe that peace, good-will and love in a warless world are not to be achieved by passing resolutions, however beautifully and strongly expressed, but rather by the regeneration of the hearts of men by the Holy Spirit, and that the Holy Spirit accomplishes His work of renewing the hearts of men through the preached word.

"(1) We recommend that the Assembly requests our ministers to hold up before our people the idea of world-wide peace and good-will between all men as given us by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and encourage all our people to work and pray for the same glorious end.

"(2) We also recommend that the treasurer be instructed to pay our usual proportionate share of the expenses of the Council." (M. G. A. 1927, p. 40.)

"The historic position of our Church is that the function of the Church is purely spiritual. We believe that this principle should apply in time of war as well as in time of peace, and that, therefore, the Church should never again bless a war, or be used as an instrument in the promotion of war. We commend our government for its leadership in establishing the Pact to Outlaw War. We believe that the Church, as a part of its spiritual mission, should endeavor to write the principles of this pact in the hearts of its people, and urge this duty upon all those who teach or preach in the Presbyterian Church in the United States." (M. G. A. 1929, p. 80.)

CHAPTER XXXVI

RELATIONS WITH OTHER BODIES

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, U. S., has shown commendable zeal in establishing closer fraternal relations with other Presbyterian churches with a view to greater efficiency in the work of the Church.

704. Council of Reformed Churches. In 1906 the Assembly adopted the "articles of agreement" by which it became a member of the Council of Reformed Churches in America holding the Presbyterian System. The articles of agreement may be found in full in Alexander's Digest (1922, p. 1054).

705. General Council merged with Western Section of the Alliance of Reformed Churches. In 1926 the General Council was merged with the Western Section of the Alliance of Reformed Churches.

"The plan of union and merger of the Council of Reformed Churches with the Western Section of the Alliance has been carefully considered. This matter has been thoroughly discussed by both bodies, and provision has been made for the assumption by the Western Section of the powers of the Council of Reformed Churches. This plan of union was agreed to in detail by both of these parties and referred to the supreme judicatories for their final approval. Pending the consummation of this union, the members of the Western Section were elected as heretofore by the Council at Cardiff. The plan of election having been changed, the Assembly under the new plan selects her own representatives on the Western Section of the General Council." (M. G. A. 1926, p. 78.)

706. Plan of merger approved. "The plan of union and merger of the Council of Reformed Churches and the Western Section of the Alliance is hereby approved, and so far as this Assembly is concerned this plan of union is consummated." (M. G. A. 1926, p. 79.)

707. **Membership.** The rule for the selection of members, taken from the constitution, is as follows:

The members of the American (or western) section shall consist of at least four representatives, ministers or ruling elders, from each of the constituent churches, for each one hundred thousand communicants, or fraction thereof, up to three hundred thousand communicants; and where the church has more than three hundred thousand communicants, then four representatives, ministers or elders, for each additional two hundred thousand communicants, or fraction thereof. These persons shall be chosen with their alternates under the direction of their respective supreme judicatories in such manner as those judicatories shall respectively determine. The members of the American section, together with other representatives regularly appointed by the supreme judicatories, shall be the delegates to the Council of the Alliance.

In accordance with this rule for membership, the Assembly re-elected the eight (8) persons who had been elected at the Cardiff council as members of the Western Section of the Alliance of Reformed Churches.

708. **Term of office of members.** The time of meeting of the Council as fixed by the constitution is during the month of February each year. It would seem, then, that the term of office should be for one year.

Dues. The dues as fixed by the Council and approved by the Assembly are $945 per year.

709. **Adjustments with Presbyterian and Reformed Churches.** "Your committee would report that the questions raised by this resolution were carefully con-

sidered, together with the agreements that have been entered into by the two Assemblies, or by their agencies, to guide churches working in the same community and occupying the same territory.

"A survey of the Presbyteries revealed the fact that the number of places in the home mission field where there are competing Presbyterian Churches has been reduced in recent years from more than one hundred to less than fifty by the transfer of congregations from one Assembly to the other on the basis of a 'fair exchange.' In the effort to reduce still further the points of friction and hurtful rivalry, the General Council of Presbyterian and Reformed Churches has directed the home mission agencies of the constituent Churches to study the whole question of duplication of effort and the problems resulting therefrom, that by the application of the principles of Christian comity and co-operation such exchanges and consolidations may be effected that will place the Presbyterian responsibility with the Church that can best meet the needs of the particular community.

"The Presbyterian Church in the United States is committed to the principle of co-operation with Churches of like faith and order. The General Assembly in approving the comity agreements recommended by the General Council of Presbyterian and Reformed Churches, of which it is a constituent member, has declared its willingness to confer as Christian brethren with representatives of other Churches in all matters of mutual interest.

"To bring the principles of comity and co-operation adopted by the Assemblies to the attention of the Presbyteries for their guidance, the following recommendations are renewed:

"I. In a community where there are two Presbyterian churches and only one is needed, that they be urged to consolidate and form one congregation with such Presbyterial connection as may be agreeable to the majority of the membership.

"This recommendation was approved by the two Assemblies of 1889. It was recommended by the Council of Presbyterian and Reformed Churches and again approved by the two Assemblies in 1911:

" 'Where Presbyteries belonging to the two Assemblies cover the same ground, they are advised to endeavor, either as Presbyteries or through their committees, to agree as brethren to have the efforts of one church expended in certain fields, and the efforts of the other church expended in certain other fields, within their common bounds, so as to prevent hurtful rivalry or antagonism.

" 'Where such churches are sufficiently near, they are recommended, a majority of each congregation agreeing, to consolidate and form one congregation, with such Presbyterial connection as may be most agreeable to the membership.' (A. D. 1922, p. 989; M. G. A. 1889, p. 652.)

"This principle of consolidation was recognized again by the two Assemblies of 1916:

" 'The right is recognized of a particular church to withdraw from its own body to that of the other, where it is done at its own motion or at the permission of its supreme judicatory, and the proper ecclesiastical and legal steps are taken.' (M. G. A. 1916, p. 183.)

"II. In a community where there are two competing Presbyterian churches, and where for any reason consolidation is not practicable, that they be urged to federate for the purpose of work and worship and unite in the employment of a pastor, each church retaining its membership roll and Presbyterial connection.

"This recommendation was approved by the two Assemblies of 1889. It was recommended by the Council of Presbyterian and Reformed Churches and again approved by the Assemblies of 1911:

" 'Where there are weak churches which, standing alone, cannot support a minister, but which can be grouped with churches connected with the other Assembly so as to form one ministerial charge, Presbyteries having jurisdiction are advised to allow such churches to be grouped under a minister from either body to whom their respective Presbyteries are willing to give them in charge, and to have their contributions to the benevolent funds passed through the channels appointed by their respective Assemblies.'

"III. In regard to the form of union which places the united church in organic connection with more than one Presbytery, the General Assembly has taken the following action:

"The General Assembly of 1915 declared:

" 'The form of government of the Presbyterian Church in the United States makes it impossible that a minister, officer or church, be under the jurisdiction of more than one ecclesiastical court of the same grade.'

"This deliverance of 1915 was reaffirmed by the Assembly of 1923 with the proviso: 'That this action of the Assembly is not to be retroactive, but is to serve for the future guidance of churches and Presbyteries.'

"IV. That in communities where one church is already at work, the other shall not enter without conference and agreement with the church occupying the field.

"The Assemblies of 1889 recommended:

" 'That persons connected with churches under the care of one of these Assemblies who may remove into the bounds of churches under the care of the other

Assembly be advised to unite with those churches and to seek their peace and prosperity.'

"The Assembly of 1896 took the following action:

" 'That, ordinarily, no church, mission or Sabbath school shall be established in small communities where the field is fully occupied by other Presbyterian or Reformed churches.'

"Upon the recommendation of the Council of Presbyterian and Reformed Churches, the Assembly of 1911 reaffirmed this principle as follows:

" 'In towns of less than five thousand inhabitants where one church is already at work, the others shall not enter without conference and agreement with the church occupying the field.'

"V. That Synods and Presbyteries be directed to appoint committees of comity, or that the powers of such committee be given to the committee of home missions or other appropriate committee of Synods and Presbyteries, to act with like committees of other Presbyterian and Reformed churches.

"In order to make effective the principles of comity, the General Council of Presbyterian and Reformed Churches sent the following resolution to the constituent churches, which was adopted by the General Assembly of 1916:

" 'That the supreme judicatories direct their Synods each to appoint three representatives, and that the Synods direct the Presbyteries and classes also to appoint three representatives to act with representatives of other Presbyterian and reformed bodies in constituting joint advisory committees of comity, for the purpose of effecting a fair exchange of churches, to discourage overlapping of home mission forces, to settle cases of friction, and to promote other phases of co-operation in home mission work, the joint advisory committees to report to each of the appointing bodies.'

"VI. The General Assembly having approved the action of the General Council of Presbyterian and Reformed Churches in directing the home mission agencies 'to study the whole home mission situation of constituent churches with a view to working out not only a comity arrangement by which hurtful rivalry may be avoided, but a constructive policy of co-operation in meeting our Reformed Church share of the home mission needs of the country,' that further plans of co-operation be left to the Assembly's Executive Committee of Home Missions to be worked out in connection with the home mission agencies of the council.

"This recommendation of the council was approved by the two Assemblies of 1920, as follows:

" 'That the Joint Committees on Comity endorse the proposed plan for co-operation among the home mission agencies of the Council of Reformed Churches, by which these agencies shall endeavor to do together, wherever practicable, mission work they are now doing separately.'

"The General Assembly of 1922, in adopting the report of the ad-interim committee on comity, took the following action:

" 'If the Assembly sees fit to adopt this report, the present committee asked to be discharged. In our opinion, the powers of such committee should be given to the Executive Committee of Home Missions.'

"In concluding this report, the committee expresses the judgment that the best form of adjustment in the case of local churches occupying the same field is by consolidation and connection with a Presbytery of one or the other of the Assemblies.

"Wherever, for any reason, this is not deemed wise or practicable, the committee is of the judgment that such churches should, if possible, co-operate according to some plan of federation." (M. G. A. 1924, p. 156.)

COMITY

ACTIONS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLIES, U. S. A., AND U. S., IN REGARD TO COMITY

710. As to co-operation in the home field. "The committee representing the General Assemblies of the Presbyterian Church, known as Northern and Southern, believing that both parties do earnestly desire so to conduct their home mission work as to prevent antagonism or hurtful rivalry, and to avoid even the appearance on the part of either of interfering with the work of the other, do agree to recommend to their respective Assemblies for adoption the following, viz.:

"1. Where Presbyteries belonging to the two Assemblies cover the same ground, they are advised to endeavor, either as Presbyteries or through their committees, to agree as brethren to have the efforts of one church expended in certain fields, and the efforts of the other church expended in certain other fields, within their common bounds, so as to prevent hurtful rivalry or antagonism.

"2. Where there are weak churches which, standing alone, cannot support a minister, but which can be grouped with churches connected with the other Assembly so as to form one ministerial charge, Presbyteries having jurisdiction are advised to allow such churches to be grouped under a minister from either body to whom their respective Presbyteries are willing to give them in charge, and to have their contributions to the general benevolent funds passed through the channels appointed by their respective Assemblies; and where such churches are sufficiently near, they are recommended, a majority of each congregation agreeing, to consolidate and form one congregation, with such Presbyterial connections as may be most agreeable to the membership.

"3. That persons connected with churches under the care of one of these Assemblies who may remove into the bounds of churches under the care of the other Assembly, be advised to unite with those churches and to seek their peace and prosperity. And where such persons are found in sufficient numbers to organize a church (there being no other Presbyterian church in their immediate vicinity), they should form such organization under the care of the Presbytery with which the contiguous Presbyterian churches are connected: *Provided,* said Presbytery belong to either of these Assemblies. Within the bounds of the Presbytery connected with one Assembly there may be communities composed largely of persons who are members of churches connected with the other Assembly whose affiliations and preferences are too strong to permit them to sever their connection. In such cases, when these persons shall have been organized into a church under the care of the nearest Presbytery connected with that Assembly to which they belong, they should receive from the Presbytery within whose bounds they reside, that sympathy and good-will which are implied in the fraternal relations established between the two Assemblies." (M. G. A. 1889, pp. 652, 653; 1916, p. 179.)

"1. That in the work of all these boards as related to each other the authority of the church courts is to be recognized as final.

"2. That there shall be no interference with churches, missions, or Sabbath schools at present existing, unless by voluntary agreement between the denominations directly concerned.

"3. That ordinarily no churches, missions or Sabbath schools shall be established in small communities where the field is fully occupied by other Presbyterian or Reformed churches.

"4. That the supreme judicatories of the several churches recommend their church members, when moving into new communities in which there is no congregation of their own church, to unite, for the time being, with some other Presbyterian or Reformed church, if such there be.

"5. That if cases of difference of opinion arise in connection with the work, they shall be referred for consideration and amicable adjustment to the missionary authorities of the denominations directly concerned." (M. G. A. 1896, p. 573.)

"The Council also recommends the following basis of co-operation in home missions among the churches of the Council for adoption, as follows:

"1. Where Presbyteries or classes belonging to the General Assemblies or General Synods cover the same ground, they are advised to endeavor, either as Presbyteries or classes, or through their committees, to agree, as brethren, to have the efforts of one church expended in certain fields, and the efforts of the other churches expended in certain other fields, within their common bounds, so as to prevent hurtful rivalry or antagonism. (M. G. A. 1911, p. 41.)

"*Resolved*, 1. That the Synods are hereby directed each to appoint three representatives to act with representatives of other Presbyterian and Reformed bodies in constituting a joint advisory committee of comity for the purpose of effecting a fair exchange of churches, to discourage overlapping of home mission forces, to settle cases of friction, and promote other phases of co-operation in home mission work, the joint advisory committee to report to each of the appointing Synods.

"*Resolved*, 2. That in any city of less than one hundred thousand, where any Presbyterian or Reformed church is at work among foreign people, no other Presbyterian or Reformed church shall open a work for the same people in that city until other cities and towns where such work is needed have been occupied.

"*Resolved*, 3. That in case of any denomination contemplating opening work for foreigners in such cities already occupied by one of the constituent churches of this Council, this matter shall be referred to the committees of comity provided for in Resolution No. 1 of this report. (M. G. A. 1914, p. 165; 1916, p. 181.)

"1. In answer to the communications on comity, we recommend that the Assembly call the attention of the Presbyteries to the importance of following established procedure and of observing the usages of comity and courtesy in receiving churches from or transferring churches to any other denomination." (M.G.A. 1927, p. 55.)

"We recommend to our General Assemblies that they direct their respective home missionary agencies to make immediately such a general survey as will reveal the various situations with which our respective churches should deal, both in missionary and non-missionary territory.

"We recommend that, in *missionary* territory, our home mission agencies shall, in co-operation with those of our Synods and Presbyteries involved, eliminate as rapidly as possible all duplication in expenditure of money or effort.

"We recommend that, in *non-missionary* territory, our Synods and Presbyteries be enjoined to take immediate and joint measures to end all local competition and friction where such exists.

"We recommend that our home mission agencies be directed to make joint reports to our General Assemblies, annually and in detail, as to the progress made to date in the accomplishment of the purposes above set forth." (M. G. A. 1929, p. 146.)

THE FEDERAL COUNCIL OF THE CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN AMERICA

711. Plan of federation.

"1. For the prosecution of work that can be better done in union than in separation, a council is hereby established whose name shall be the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America.

"2. The following Christian bodies shall be entitled to representation in this federal council on their approval of the purpose and plan of the organization: (See list of constituent bodies in 1924-25 Yearbook of the Churches.)

712. Object of federation.

"3. The object of this federal council shall be:

"I. To express the fellowship and catholic unity of the Christian Church.

"II. To bring the Christian bodies of America into united service for Christ and the world.

"III. To encourage devotional fellowship and mutual counsel concerning the spiritual life and religious activities of the churches.

"IV. To secure a larger combined influence for the Churches of Christ in all matters affecting the moral and social condition of the people, so as to promote the application of the law of Christ in every relation of human life.

"V. To assist in the organization of local branches of the Federal Council to promote its aims in their communities."

713. Authority limited.

"4. This Federal Council shall have no authority over the constituent bodies adhering to it; but its province shall be limited to the expression of its counsel and the recommending of a course of action in matters of common interest to the churches, local councils and individual Christians.

"It has no authority to draw up a common creed or form of government or of worship, or in any way to limit the full autonomy of the Christian bodies adhering to it.

714. Membership.

"5. Members of this Federal Council shall be appointed as follows: Each of the Christian bodies adhering to this federal council shall be entitled to four members, and shall be further entitled to one member for every fifty thousand of its communicants, or major fraction thereof. Alternates may be chosen and certified to the council in the same manner and to the same number as members to fill vacancies caused by the death, resignation, or permanent disqualification of members. Such alternates may also attend sessions of the council in the absence of members and exercise all powers of members as temporary substitutes during such absence." (Federal Council Yearbook, 1924-25, pp. 256, 257.)

715. Meetings. "Section 1. Regular meetings of the council shall be held quadrennially on the first Wednesday of December, unless otherwise voted by the council, executive committee or administrative committee, at such place and hour as may be determined by the administrative committee." (Federal Council Yearbook, 1924-25, p. 258.)

716. Terms of representatives. The terms of representatives from the Assembly are for four years and expire at the Assembly following the regular quadrennial meeting in December. Representatives were appointed in 1929, and should be appointed every four years thereafter.

717. Expenses of representatives. The expenses of only two members of the Executive Committee and one member of the Administrative Committee of the Federal Council in attendance upon the annual meetings are paid by the Assembly. The expenses of representatives to the quadrennial meeting of the council are not paid by the Assembly.

718. Dues paid by the Assembly. The Assembly pays annually the sum of $750 to the Federal Council.

719. Duty of representatives to bear testimony against actions contrary to position of our church. "In response to the overture from Asheville Presbytery (No. 37), asking the Assembly to instruct its representatives to continue to bear faithful testimony against the actions that are contrary to the position of our Church, we recommend that this overture be answered in the affirmative. In doing so, we take occasion to again restate our historic position regarding the spiritual and redemptive mission of the Church, its duty being, under its Sovereign Lord and Head, to preach the Gospel to every creature, and not settle matters of civil and political nature. The Assembly urges our representatives in the council to continue to witness against all actions and activities of the council that may transgress the principles stated above. We believe, however, that the teaching of Jesus Christ ought to be applied to all the relationships of life." (M. G. A. 1929, p. 78.)

720. Historic position of function of Church purely spiritual. "We recommend, further, that the Assembly adopt the following resolution:

"The historic position of our Church is that the function of the Church is purely spiritual. We believe that this principle should apply in time of war as well as in time of peace, and that, therefore, the Church should never again bless a war, or be used as an instrument in the promotion of war. We commend our government for its leadership in establishing the Pact to Outlaw War. We believe that the Church, as a part of its spiritual mission, should endeavor to write the principles of this pact in the hearts of its people and urge this duty upon all those who teach or preach in the Presbyterian Church in the United States." (M. G. A. 1929, p. 80.)

CHAPTER XXXVII

DISCIPLINE

721. Its nature. "Discipline is the exercise of authority given the Church by the Lord Jesus Christ to instruct and guide its members and to promote its purity and welfare." (B. Ch. O., par. 164.)

722. Word "discipline" used in two senses. 1. Referring "to the whole government, inspection, training, guardianship, and control which the Church maintains over its members, its officers and its courts"; 2. "A restricted and technical sense, signifying judicial process." (B. Ch. O., par. 164.)

723. Its subjects. "It refers only to those who have made a profession of their faith in Christ." (B. Ch. O., par. 165.)

724. Its ends. "The ends of discipline, so far as it involves judicial action, are the spiritual good of the offender, the vindication of the honor of Christ, the rebuke of offenses, the removal of scandal, and the promotion of the purity and welfare of the Church." (B. Ch. O., par. 166.)

725. Power to discipline for building up, not for destruction. "The powers which Christ has given the Church is for building up, and not for destruction, and is to be exercised as under a dispensation of mercy and not of wrath." (B. Ch. O., par. 167.)

726. Church to act as a mother. "The Church is to act as a mother who corrects her children for their good, that every one of them may be presented faultless in the day of Christ." (B. Ch. O., par. 167.)

727. Parents primarily responsible for discipline of children. "The spiritual nurture, instruction and training of the children of the Church are committed by God primarily to their parents, who are responsible to the Church for the faithful discharge of their obligations, and it is a principal duty of the Church to promote true religion in the home." (B. Ch. O., par. 168.)

728. **Church to make provision through Sunday schools and Bible classes.** "The Church should also make special provision for instructing the children in the Bible and in the church Catechisms, and to this end Sessions should establish and conduct under their authority Sunday schools and Bible classes, and should adopt such other helpful methods as may be found helpful." (B. Ch. O., par. 169.)

729. **Church to sustain sympathetic relation to children.** "The church should maintain constant and sympathetic relations with the children, and should encourage them on coming to years of discretion to make confession of the Lord Jesus Christ and to enter upon all the privileges of full church membership. Even if they are wayward, they should be cherished by the church, and every means used to reclaim them." (B. Ch. O., par. 170.)

730. **Church's relation to adult non-communing members.** "Adult non-communing members who receive with meekness and appreciation the oversight and instruction of the church are entitled to special attention. Their rights and privileges under the covenant should be frequently and fully explained, and they should be warned of the sin and danger of neglecting their covenant obligations." (B. Ch. O., par. 171.)

731. **All non-communing members under care of church.** "All non-communing members shall be deemed under the care of the church to which their parents belong, if they live under the parental roof and are minors; otherwise, under that of the church where they reside, or with which they ordinarily worship." (B. Ch. O., par. 172.)

CHAPTER XXXVIII

OFFENCES

732. Their nature. "An offence, the proper object of judicial process, is anything in the principles or practice of a church member professing faith in Christ which is contrary to the Word of God." (B. Ch. O., par. 173.)

733. Assembly deliverances. The Session must first determine whether the conduct of this member is an "offence" in the light of paragraph 173, Book of Church Order. The General Assembly said in 1865, "that it is the undoubted right of the Church Session and of every other judicatory to make a deliverance, affirming its sense of what is 'an offence' in the meaning of the Book of Discipline." (A. D. 1897, p. 89; M. G. A. 1865, p. 361.)

If the member, in the judgment of the Session, has committed an offence, then they should first proceed in accordance with paragraphs 186 and 193, seeking to restore the offender. If this fails, then there is no other way to proceed except to prefer charges. If he fails or refuses to appear before the Session (paragraphs 198-199) and is cited a second time, and if he fails or refuses to appear he shall be dealt with for contumacy. There is no provision in the Book of Church Order or Rules of Discipline for *dropping* a member.

734. Discipline without trial. The General Assembly has ruled that a member cannot be suspended or excommunicated from the church without trial for charges brought against him, and without being brought before the court to which he is amenable. He cannot be suspended simply upon the report of a committee of the court that he had confessed that he was guilty of crimes worthy of suspension or excommunication. The Session cannot lawfully pass sentence on a member in his absence from the court. (A. D. 1897, p. 527; M. G. A. 1871, p. 28.)

735. **Offences to be interpreted in the light of the Standards.** "The Confession of Faith and the Larger and Shorter Catechisms of the Westminster Assembly, together with the formularies of government, discipline, and worship, are accepted by the Presbyterian Church in the United States as standard expositions of the teachings of Scripture in relation to both faith and practice. Nothing, therefore, ought to be considered by any court as an offence, or admitted as a matter of accusation, which cannot be proved to be such from Scripture, as interpreted in these Standards." (B. Ch. O., par. 173.)

736. **Kinds of offences.** "Offences are either personal or general, private or public; but all of them being sins against God are therefore grounds of discipline." (B. Ch. O., par. 174.)

737. **Nature of personal offences.** "Personal offences are violations of the divine law, considered in the special relation of wrongs or injuries to particular individuals. General offences are heresies or immoralities having no such relation, or considered apart from it." (B. Ch. O., par. 175.)

738. **Nature of private offences.** "Private offences are those which are known only to a few persons. Public offences are those which are notorious." (B. Ch. O., par. 176.)

CHAPTER XXXIX

CHURCH CENSURES

739. Scriptures final authority in all controversies. "The Old Testament in Hebrew (which was the native language of the people of God of old), and the New Testament in Greek (which at the time of the writing of it was most generally known to the nations), being immediately inspired by God, and by His singular care and providence kept pure in all ages, are therefore authentical; so as in all controversies of religion, the Church is finally to appeal to them. But because these original tongues are not known to all the people of God who have right unto and interest in the Scriptures, and are commanded, in the fear of God, to read and search them, therefore they are to be translated into the vulgar language of every nation unto which they come, that the Word of God dwelling plentifully in all, they may worship Him in an acceptable manner, and through patience and comfort of the Scriptures may have hope." (C. of F., Ch. I, par. 8.)

"The Supreme Judge, by which all controversies of religion are to be determined, and all decrees of councils, opinions of ancient writers, doctrines of men, and private spirits, are to be examined, and in whose sentence we are to rest, can be no other but the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scripture." (C. of F., Ch. I, par. 10.)

740. In the hands of church officers. "To these officers the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven are committed, by virtue whereof they have power respectively to retain and remit sins, to shut that Kingdom against the impenitent, both by the word and censures, and to open it unto penitent sinners, by the ministry of the Gospel and by absolution from censures, as occasion shall require." (C. of F., Ch. XXX, par. 2.)

741. Object of church censure. "Church censures are necessary for the reclaiming and gaining of offending brethren; for deterring of others from like offences; for purging out of that leaven which might infect the whole lump; for vindicating the honor of Christ, and the holy profession of the Gospel; and for preventing the wrath of God, which might justly fall upon the Church if they should suffer His covenant, and the seals thereof, to be profaned by notorious and obstinate offenders." (C. of F., Ch. XXX, par. 3.)

742. Method of procedure. "For the better attaining of these ends, the officers of the church are to proceed by admonition, suspension from the sacrament of the Lord's Supper for a season, and by excommunication from the Church, according to the nature of the crime, and demerit of the person." (C. of F., Ch. XXX, par. 4.)

743. Kinds of censure. I. Admonition. "Admonition is the formal reproof of an offender by a church court, warning him of his guilt and danger, and exhorting him to be more circumspect and watchful in the future." (B. Ch. O., par. 178.)

(1) *Termination of admonition.* Admonition terminates with its administration. "Judicial admonition is a censure whose legal force terminates when it is inflicted." (A. D. 1910, p. 669; M. G. A. 1881, p. 378.)

(2) *In good and regular standing after admonition.* "W. S. Turner was not under judicial censure when he applied for a letter of dismission. He was 'in good and regular standing' in the sense that he was not under judicial process or censure." (A. D. 1910, p. 669; M. G. A. 1881, p. 378.)

744. II. Suspension. This is a temporary exclusion of (1) Church members from sealing ordinances; and (2) Church officers from the exercise of their office. (B. Ch. O., par. 179.)

Definite suspension. "Definite suspension is administered when the credit of religion, the honor of Christ and the good of the delinquent demand it, even though he may have given satisfaction to the court." (B. Ch. O., par. 179.)

Indefinite suspension. "Indefinite suspension is the exclusion of an offender from sealing ordinances, or from his office, until he exhibits signs of repentance, or until, by his conduct, the necessity of the highest censure be made manifest." (B. Ch. O., par. 179.)

745. III. Excommunication. "Excommunication is the excision (cutting off) of an offender from the communion of the Church." (B. Ch. O., par. 180.)

When excommunication should be inflicted. "This censure is to be inflicted only on account of gross crime or heresy when the offender shows himself incorrigible and contumacious." (B. Ch. O., par. 180.)

Design of the sentence of excommunication. "The design of this censure is to operate on the offender as a means of reclaiming him, to deliver the Church from the scandal of his offence, and to inspire all with fear by the example of his discipline." (B. Ch. O., par. 180.)

746. IV. Deposition. "Deposition is the degradation of an officer from his office, and may or may not be accompanied with the infliction of other censure." (B. Ch. O., par. 181.)

CHAPTER XL

PARTIES IN CASES OF PROCESS

747. **Original jurisdiction.** "Original jurisdiction in relation to ministers of the Gospel pertains exclusively to the Presbytery, and in relation to other church members to the Session, unless the Session shall be unable to try the person or persons accused, in which case the Presbytery shall have the right of jurisdiction." (B. Ch. O., par. 182.)

748. **Duties of Sessions and Presbyteries.** "It is the duty of all church Sessions and Presbyteries to exercise care over those subject to their authority; and they shall, with due diligence and great discretion, demand from such persons satisfactory explanations concerning reports affecting their Christian character." (B. Ch. O., par. 183.)

749. **Duty when persons deem themselves aggrieved.** "This duty is more imperative when those who deem themselves aggrieved by injurious reports shall ask an investigation." (B. Ch. O., par. 183.)

750. **When the court shall institute process.** "If such investigation, however originating, should result in raising a strong presumption of the guilt of the party involved, the court shall institute process, and shall appoint a prosecutor to prepare the indictment and to conduct the case." (B. Ch. O., par. 183.)

751. **Original parties.** "The original and only parties in a case of process are the accuser and the accused." (B. Ch. O., par. 184.)

752. **The accuser.** "The accuser is always the Presbyterian Church in the United States, whose honor and purity are to be maintained." (B. Ch. O., par. 184.)

753. **The accused.** A minister, officer or member of the church.

754. The prosecutor. "This prosecutor shall be a member of the court, except that, in a case before the Session, he may be any communing member of the same congregation with the accused." (B. Ch. O., par. 183.)

"The prosecutor, whether voluntary or appointed, is always the representative of the church, and as such has all its rights in the case." (B. Ch. O., par. 184.)

755. Prosecutor when the offence is general. "When the offence is general, the cause may be conducted either (1) by any person appearing as prosecutor, or (2) by a prosecutor appointed by the court." (B. Ch. O., par. 187.)

756. Form of the indictment. "In the name of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, the Session (or Presbytery) charges you with (*here insert the charge in full*). Witnesses: (*here insert names*), which is against the peace, unity and purity of the Church, and the honor and majesty of the Lord Jesus Christ as the King and Head thereof."

By order of the Session (or Presbytery).

Signed..

Clerk of Session (or Presbytery).

(B. Ch. O., pars. 185, 196, 197.)

757. Efforts at reconciliation. "An injured party shall not become a prosecutor of personal offences without having tried the means of reconciliation and of reclaiming the offender, required by Christ: 'Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother; but if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.' " (Matt. XVIII. 15, 16.) (B. Ch. O., par. 186.)

758. **Investigation by church courts.** "A church court, however, may judicially investigate personal offences as if general, when the interests of religion seem to demand it." (B. Ch. O., par. 186.)

759. **Sending of a committee.** "There are cases in which it will promote the interests of religion to send a committee to converse in a private manner with the offender, and endeavor to bring him to a sense of his guilt, before instituting actual process." (B. Ch. O., par. 188.)

760. **Character of accuser.** "Great caution ought to be exercised in receiving accusations from any person who is known to indulge a malignant spirit towards the accused; who is not of good character; who is himself under censure or process; who is deeply interested in any respect in the conviction of the accused, or who is known to be litigious, rash or highly imprudent." (B. Ch. O., par. 189.)

761. **Warning to voluntary prosecutor.** "Every voluntary prosecutor shall be previously warned, that if he fail to show probable cause of the charges he must himself be censured as a slanderer of the brethren, in proportion to the malignity or rashness manifested in the prosecution." (B. Ch. O., par. 190.)

762. **Functions of officer suspended pending trial.** "When a member of a church court is under process, all his official functions may be suspended, at its discretion; but this shall never be done in the way of censure." (B. Ch. O., par. 191.)

763. **Rights of accused.** "In the discussion of all questions arising in his own case, the accused shall exercise the rights of defendant only, not of judge." (B. Ch. O., par. 192.)

764. Members of court cautioned. "It is incumbent on every member of a court of Jesus Christ engaged in a trial of offenders to bear in mind the inspired injunction: 'If a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.'" (B. Ch. O., par. 193.)

765. Occasions when process shall commence. "Process against an offender shall not be commenced unless some person or persons undertake to make out the charge; or unless the court finds it necessary, for the honor of religion itself, to take the step provided for in Chapter V, paragraph 183." (B. Ch. O., par. 194.)

766. Charges to be in writing. "When a charge is laid before a Session or Presbytery it shall be reduced to writing." (B. Ch. O., par. 195.)

767. Business of first meeting of the court. "Nothing shall be done at the first meeting of the court, unless by consent of parties, except:

"1. To appoint a prosecutor.

"2. To order the indictment to be drawn.

"3. To give a copy with names of witnesses to accused." (B. Ch. O., par. 195.)

768. First citation. The court shall "cite all parties and their witnesses to appear and be heard at another meeting." (B. Ch. O., par. 195.)

769. Time between the first and second meetings of the court. The second meeting of the court "shall not be sooner than ten days after such citation." (B. Ch. O., par. 195.)

770. Procedure at second meeting of the court. See procedure under paragraph 207, Book of Church Order.

771. Procedure when accused confesses. "If he confess, the court may deal with him according to its discretion; if he plead and take issue, the trial shall proceed. Accused parties may plead in writing when they cannot be personally present, and parties necessarily absent should have counsel assigned to them." (B. Ch. O., par. 195.)

772. **Procedure when accused refuses to be present.** "When an accused person shall refuse to obey a citation, he shall be cited a second time; and this second citation shall be accompanied with a notice that if he do not appear at the time appointed (unless providentially hindered, which fact he must make known to the court), or that if he appear and refuse to plead, he shall be dealt with for his contumacy, as hereinafter provided." (See, also, par. 214, B. Ch. O.) (B. Ch. O., par. 198.)

773. **Second citation.** The second citation should be issued immediately after the second meeting of the court as is seen in paragraph 198 above.

774. **Time between the second citation and the third meeting of the court.** "The time allotted for his appearance on the subsequent citation shall be left to the discretion of the court, provided that it be not less than is quite sufficient for a seasonable and convenient compliance with the citation." (B. Ch. O., par. 199.)

775. **Trial by contiguous co-ordinate court.** "When the offence with which an accused person stands charged took place at a distance, and it is inconvenient for the witnesses to appear before the court having jurisdiction, that court may either appoint a commission of its body, or request the co-ordinate court contiguous to the place where the facts occurred, to take the testimony for it. The accused shall always have reasonable notice of the time and place of the meeting of this commission or co-ordinate court." (B. Ch. O., par. 200.)

776. Transferring case to contiguous co-ordinate court. "When an offence, alleged to have been committed at a distance, is not likely otherwise to become known to the court having jurisdiction, it shall be the duty of the court within whose bounds the facts occurred, after satisfying itself that there is probable ground of accusation, to send notice to the court having jurisdiction, which shall at once proceed against the accused; or the whole case may be remitted for trial to the co-ordinate court within whose bounds the offence is alleged to have been committed." (B. Ch. O., par. 201.)

777. Citations served. "Before proceeding to trial, courts ought to ascertain that their citations have been duly served." (B. Ch. O., par. 202.)

778. Judicial Committee appointed. "In every process, if deemed expedient, there may be a committee appointed, which shall be called the Judicial Committee, and whose duty it shall be: (1) To digest and arrange all papers, and (2) To prescribe, under the direction of the court, the whole order of the proceedings." (B. Ch. O., par. 203.)

779. Rights of members of Judicial Committee. "The members of this committee shall be entitled, notwithstanding their performance of this duty, to sit and vote in the case as members of the court." (B. Ch. O., par. 203.)

780. Charge by the moderator. "When the trial is about to begin, it shall be the duty of the moderator solemnly to announce from the chair that the court is about to pass to the consideration of the cause, and to enjoin on the members to recollect and regard their high character as judges of a court of Jesus Christ, and the solemn duty in which they are about to engage." (B. Ch. O., par. 204.)

781. **Examination of witnesses.** "In order that the trial may be fair and impartial, the witnesses shall be examined in the presence of the accused, or at least after he shall have received due citation to attend." (B. Ch. O., par. 205.)

782. **Witnesses cross-examined.** "Witnesses may be cross-examined by both parties, and any questions asked which are pertinent to the issue." (B. Ch. O., par. 205.)

783. **Procedure when questions arise.** "On all questions arising in the progress of a trial, the discussion shall first be between the parties; and when they have been heard, they may be required to withdraw from the court until the members deliberate upon and decide the point." (B. Ch. O., par. 206.)

784. **Order of procedure in the trial.** "When a court of first resort proceeds to the trial of a cause, the following order shall be observed:

"1. The moderator shall charge the court.

"2. The indictment shall be read, and the answer of the accused heard.

"3. The witnesses for the prosecutor and then those for the accused shall be examined.

"4. The parties shall be heard:

(a) First, the prosecutor,
(b) And then the accused;
(c) And the prosecutor shall close.

"5. The roll shall be called, and the members may express their opinion in the cause.

"6. The vote shall be taken, the verdict announced, and the judgment entered on the records." (B. Ch. O., par. 207; see, also, par. 195.)

785. **Right of challenge.** "Either party may, for cause, challenge the right of any member to sit in the trial of the case, which question shall be decided by

the members of the court other than the one challenged." (B. Ch. O., par. 208.)

786. **Disqualifications of members of court during trial.** "Pending the trial of the case, any member of the court who shall express his opinion of its merits to either party, or to any person not a member of the court; or who shall absent himself from any sitting without the permission of the court, or satisfactory reasons rendered, shall be thereby disqualified from taking part in the subsequent proceedings." (B. Ch. O., par. 209.)

787. **Copies to be furnished.** "The parties shall be allowed copies of the whole proceedings at their own expense, if they demand them." (B. Ch. O., par. 210.)

788. **Keeping of minutes.** "Minutes of the trial shall be kept by the clerk, which shall exhibit the charges, the answer, all the testimony, and all such acts, orders and decisions of the court relating to the case, as either party may desire, and also the judgment." (B. Ch. O., par. 210.)

789. **Care of papers by the clerk.** "The clerk shall, without delay, attach together the charges, the answer, the citations and returns thereto, and the minutes herein required to be kept. These papers, when so attached, shall constitute 'the record of the case.' " (B. Ch. O., par. 210.)

790. **"Record of the case."** This is made up by clerk from all papers in the case. (See "Care of Papers.")

791. **Record of case in higher courts.** It is the same record that was made in the court of original jurisdiction. "Nothing which is not contained in this 'record' shall be taken into consideration in the higher court." (B. Ch. O., par. 210; see, also, par. 277.)

792. **Judgment sent down to lower court.** "On the final decision of a cause in a higher court, its judg-

ment shall be sent down to the court in which the case originated." (B. Ch. O., par. 210.)

The clerk shall make a transcript of the minutes, including the judgment, and transmit it to the clerk of the lower court.

793. **Professional counsel not allowed.** "No professional counsel shall be permitted as such to appear and plead in cases of process in any court." (B. Ch. O., par. 211.)

794. **Counsel for accused allowed.** "An accused person may, if he desires it, be represented before the Session by any communing member of the same particular church, or before any other court, by any member of the court. A member of the court so employed shall not be allowed to sit in judgment in the case." (B. Ch. O., par. 211.)

795. **Time limit on process.** "Process in case of scandal shall commence within the space of one year after the offence was committed, unless it has recently become flagrant." (B. Ch. O., par. 212.)

796. **An exception to time limit process.** "When however, a church member shall commit an offence after removing to a place far distant from his former residence, and where his connection with the church is unknown, in consequence of which circumstances process cannot be instituted within the time above specified, the recent discovery of the church membership of the individual shall be considered as equivalent to the offence itself having recently become flagrant. The same principle, in like circumstances, shall also apply to ministers." (B. Ch. O., par. 212.)

797. **Session the court of original jurisdiction.** "Process against all church members shall be entered before the Session of the church to which such members belong." (B. Ch. O., par. 213.)

798. Session not to try minister. The session cannot enter a case against a minister. He is not a member of the church but of the Presbytery, the court of original jurisdiction for ministers. (B. Ch. O., par. 213; M. G. A. 1927, p. 49.)

799. When Presbytery assumes original jurisdiction. "In cases when the Session is rendered incapable of exercising jurisdiction, the case shall be entered before the Presbytery." (B. Ch. O., par. 213.)

800. Effect of two citations. "When an accused person, having been twice duly cited, shall refuse to appear before the Session, or, appearing, shall refuse to plead, the court shall enter upon its records the fact, together with the nature of the offence charged, and he shall be suspended from the sealing ordinances for his contumacy." (B. Ch. O., par. 214.)

801. Contumacy. (See paragraph 214, Book of Church Order.)

802. Expediency in making public a censure. The Session shall determine whether it deems it expedient or not to make public a censure. (B. Ch. O., par. 214.)

803. Removal of contumacy. A censure "shall in no case be removed until the offender has not only repented of his contumacy, but has given satisfaction in relation to the charges against him." (B. Ch. O., par. 214.)

804. Effect of persistent contumacy. "If the accused persist in his contumacy, the court may proceed to inflict the highest censure." (B. Ch. O., par. 215.)

805. Action by Session pending instituting process. "When it is impracticable immediately to commence process against an accused church member, the Session may, if it think the edification of the church requires it, prevent the accused from approaching the Lord's table until the charges against him can be examined." (B. Ch. O., par. 216.)

CHAPTER XLI

PROCESS AGAINST A MINISTER

806. **Entrance by Presbytery.** "Process against a minister shall be entered before the Presbytery of which he is a member." (B. Ch. O., par. 217.)

807. **Caution against slight grounds for charge.** "As no minister ought, on account of his office, to be screened in his sin, or slightly censured, so scandalous charges ought not to be received against him on slight grounds." (B. Ch. O., par. 218.)

808. **Duty of giving private warning.** "If any one know a minister to be guilty of a private offence, he should warn him in private." (B. Ch. O., par. 219.)

809. **Duty to consult another minister.** "But if the offence be persisted in, or become public, he should bring the case to the attention of some other minister of the Presbytery for his advice." (B. Ch. O., par. 219.)

810. **Procedure after two citations.** "If a minister accused of an offence, having been twice duly cited, shall refuse to appear before the Presbytery, he shall be immediately suspended." (B. Ch. O., par. 220.)

811. **Procedure after three citations.** "If after another citation, he shall still refuse to attend, he shall be deposed as contumacious, and suspended or excommunicated from the Church." (B. Ch. O., par. 220.)

812. **Suspension for contumacy.** This sentence shall be inflicted when a minister has shown himself to be contumacious. (B. Ch. O., par. 220.)

813. **Excommunication.** This sentence is in addition to deposition for contumacy, when the evidence justifies the court. (B. Ch. O., par. 220.)

814. Record by court. "Record shall be made of the judgment and of the charges under which he (the minister) was arraigned." (B. Ch. O., par. 220.)

815. Sentence to be made public. When a minister has been deposed for contumacy, and either suspended or excommunicated from the church, the court shall make the sentence public. (B. Ch. O., par. 220.)

816. Warrant for deposition. 1. Heresy. 2. Schism. (B. Ch. O., par. 221.)

817. Consider errors carefully. "Errors to be carefully considered:

1. "Whether they strike at the vitals of religion.
2. "Whether they are industriously spread.
3. "Whether they arise from weakness of human understanding.
4. "Whether they are likely to do much injury."

(B. Ch. O., par. 221.)

818. Presbytery to judge effect of error. "If the Presbytery find on trial that the matter complained of amounts to no more than such acts of infirmity as may be amended, so that little or nothing remains to hinder the minister's usefulness, it shall take all prudent measures to remove the scandal." (B. Ch. O., par. 222.)

819. Effect of confession. "If the matter be base and flagitious, such as (1) drunkenness, (2) uncleanness, or (3) crimes of a higher nature, however penitent he may appear to the satisfaction of all, the court shall, without delay (1) suspend him from the exercise of his office, or (2) depose him from the ministry." (B. Ch. O., par. 223.)

820. Restoration of suspended minister. He "shall not be restored even on the deepest sorrow for his sin until he shall exhibit for a considerable time such an eminently exemplary, humble and edifying walk and conversation as shall heal the wound made by his scandal." (B. Ch. O., par. 224.)

821. Restoration of deposed minister. "A deposed minister shall in no case be restored until it shall appear that the general sentiment of the Church is strongly in his favor, and demands his restoration." (B. Ch. O., par. 224.)

822. Restoration by court of original jurisdiction. Restoration of a deposed minister shall be "by the court inflicting the censure or with its consent." (B. Ch. O., par. 224.)

823. Minister to vacate church after deposition. "When a minister is deposed, his church shall be declared vacant; but when he is suspended, it shall be left to the discretion of the Presbytery whether the censure shall include the dissolution of the pastoral relation." (B. Ch. O., par. 225.)

824. Divestment of office. "Whenever a minister of the Gospel shall habitually fail to be engaged in the regular discharge of his official functions, it shall be the duty of the Presbytery, at a stated meeting, to inquire into the cause of such dereliction, and if necessary to institute judicial proceedings against him for breach of his covenant engagement. If it shall appear that his neglect proceeds only from his want of acceptance to the church, Presbytery may, upon the same principle upon which it withdraws license from a licentiate for want of evidence of the divine call, divest him of his office without censure, even against his will, a majority of two-thirds being necessary for this purpose." (B. Ch. O., par. 226.)

825. Divestment notice by the clerk. "In such a case, the clerk shall, under the order of the Presbytery, forthwith deliver to the individual concerned a written notice that, at the next stated meeting, the question of his being so dealt with is to be considered. This notice shall distinctly state the grounds for this proceeding. The party thus notified shall be heard in his own defense." (B. Ch. O., par. 226.)

826. **Appeal of divested minister.** If the Presbytery by a two-thirds vote pass against the minister and divest him of his office, "he may appeal to the higher court as if he had been tried after the usual forms." (B. Ch. O., par. 226.)

827. **Application of divestment to ruling elders and deacons.** "This principle of divestment applies with any necessary changes to ruling elders and deacons." (B. Ch. O., par. 226.)

CHAPTER XLII

EVIDENCE

828. **Competent witnesses.** "All persons of proper age and intelligence are competent witnesses, except (1) those who do not believe in the existence of God; (2) those who do not believe in a future state of reward and punishments." (B. Ch. O., par. 227.)

829. **Testifying by accused.** "The accused party may be allowed, but shall not be compelled to testify." (B. Ch. O., par. 227.)

830. **Testifying by accuser.** "The accuser shall be required to testify on the demand of the accused." (B. Ch. O., par. 227.)

831. **Challenging of witnesses.** "Either party has the right to challenge a witness whom he believes to be incompetent." (B. Ch. O., par. 227.)

832. **Court to decide competency of witnesses.** "The court shall examine and decide upon" the competency of witnesses, even though one or both parties may challenge them. (B. Ch. O., par. 227.)

833. **Credibility of evidence.** "It belongs to the court to judge the decree of credibility to be attached to all evidence." (B. Ch. O., par. 227.)

834. **Husband and wife.** "A husband or wife shall not be compelled to bear testimony the one against the other in any court." (B. Ch. O., par. 228.)

835. **More than one witness necessary.** "The testimony of more than one witness shall be necessary in order to establish any charge." (B. Ch. O., par. 229.)

836. **Corroborative evidence.** Corroborative evidence in addition to one witness may be sufficient to prove an offence. (B. Ch. O., par. 229.)

837. **Presence of witnesses.** "No witness afterwards to be examined, except a member of the court, shall be present during the examination of another witness on the same case, if either party object." (B. Ch. O., par. 230.)

838. **Examination of witnesses.** The following order should be preserved:

1. By party introducing them.
2. By opposite party.
3. By the court.
4. Either party may put additional interrogatories.

(B. Ch. O., par. 231.)

839. **Court to judge questions.** "No question shall be put or answered except by permission of moderator, subject to an appeal to the court." (B. Ch. O., par. 231.)

840. **The oath.** "You solemnly promise, in the presence of God, that you will declare the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, according to the best of your knowledge in the matter in which you are called to witness, as you shall answer it to the great Judge of the living and the dead." (B. Ch. O., par. 232.)

841. **Affirmation allowed.** If a witness "prefers to swear or affirm in any other manner" than the usual oath, "he should be allowed to do so." (B. Ch. O., par. 232.)

842. **Questions and answers in writing.** "Every question put to a witness shall, if required, be reduced to writing. When answered, it shall, together with the answer, be recorded, if deemed by the court, or by either party, of sufficient importance, and the testimony of the witness shall be read to him for his approbation and subscription." (B. Ch. O., par. 233.)

843. **Record of the court.** "The records of a court, or any part of them, whether original or transcribed, if regularly authenticated by the moderator and clerk, or by either of them, shall be deemed good and sufficient evidence in every other court." (B. Ch. O., par. 234.)

844. **Valid testimony.** "The testimony by one court, and regularly certified, shall be received by every other court as no less valid than if it had been taken by itself." (B. Ch. O., par. 235.)

845. **Testimony by commission or co-ordinate court.** "When it is not convenient for a court to have the whole, or perhaps any part of the testimony in any particular case taken in its presence, a commission shall be appointed, or co-ordinate court requested to take the testimony in question, which shall be considered as if taken in the presence of the court; of which commission or co-ordinate court, and of the time and place of its meeting, due notice shall be given to the opposite party, that he may have an opportunity of attending. And if the accused shall desire, on his part, to take testimony at a distance, for his own exculpation, he shall give notice to the court of the time and place at which it is proposed to take it, that a commission or co-ordinate court, as in the former case, may be appointed for the purpose. Or the testimony may be taken on written interrogatories by filing the same with the clerk of the court having jurisdiction in the case, and giving two weeks' notice thereof to the adverse party, during which time he may file cross interrogatories if he desire it; and the testimony shall then be taken by the commission or co-ordinate court in answer to the direct and cross-interrogatories, if such are filed, and no notice need be given of the time and place of taking the testimony." (B. Ch. O., par. 236.)

846. Members of court disqualified. "A member of the court who has given testimony in a case becomes disqualified for sitting as a judge if either party makes objection." (B. Ch. O., par. 237.)

847. Refusal to testify. "An officer or private member of the church refusing to testify may be censured for contumacy." (B. Ch. O., par. 238.)

848. New testimony. Testimony newly discovered and considered important may be the ground for asking for a new trial, "and it shall be within the power of the court to grant his request." (B. Ch. O., par. 239.)

849. New testimony before appellate court. "If in the prosecution of an appeal, new testimony be offered which, in the judgment of the appellate court, has an important bearing on the case it shall be competent for that court to refer the case to the lower court for a new trial; or, with the consent of parties, to take the testimony and proceed with the case." (B. Ch. O., par. 240.)

CHAPTER XLIII

INFLICTION OF CHURCH CENSURES

850. **Preliminary steps.** "When any member or officer of the church shall be found guilty of an offence the court shall proceed with all tenderness and shall deal with its offending brother in the spirit of meekness, the members considering themselves lest they also be tempted." (B. Ch. O., par. 241.)

851. **Private offences.** "In the case of private offences, the censure should be administered in the presence of the court alone or in private by one or more members of the court." (B. Ch. O., par. 242.)

852. **Public offences.** "In case of public offences, the degree of censure and mode of administering it shall be within the discretion of the court, acting in accordance with paragraphs below, which deal with particular censures." (B. Ch. O., par. 242.)

853. **Private admonition.** "Private admonition should be administered in private by one or more members of the court if the offence is known only to a few and is not aggravated in character." (B. Ch. O., par. 243.)

854. **Public admonition.** "If the offence is public, the admonition should be administered by the moderator in presence of the court, and may also be announced in public should the court deem it expedient." (B. Ch. O., par. 243.)

855. **Definite suspension.** "Definite suspension should be administered (1) in the presence of the court alone, or (2) in open session of the court, as it may deem best, and (3) public announcement thereof shall be at the court's discretion." (B. Ch. O., par. 244.)

856. **Indefinite suspension.** "Indefinite suspension should be administered after the manner prescribed

for definite suspension, but with added solemnity, that it may be the means of impressing the mind of the delinquent with a proper sense of his danger, and under the blessing of God of leading him to repentance." (B. Ch. O., par. 245.)

857. **Form of address.** "When the court has resolved to pass this sentence, the moderator shall address the offending brother to the following purpose:

"*Whereas*, you A. B. (here describe the person as a minister, ruling elder, deacon, or private member of the church), are convicted by sufficient proof (or are guilty by your own confession) of the sin of (here insert the offence), we, the Presbytery (or church Session) of C. D., in the name and by the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, do now declare you suspended from the sacraments of the Church (and from the exercise of your office) until you give satisfactory evidence of repentance." (B. Ch. O., par. 245.)

858. **Prayer.** "To this shall be added such advice or admonition as may be judged necessary, and the whole shall be concluded with prayer to Almighty God that He would follow this act of discipline with His blessing." (B. Ch. O., par. 245.)

859. **Excommunication.** "Excommunication is to be administered according to one or other of the two modes laid down for indefinite suspension or to be inflicted in public, as the court may decide. In administering this censure, the moderator of the Session shall make a statement of the several steps which have been taken with respect to the offending brother and of the decision to cut him off from the communion of the church. He shall then show from Matthew xviii, 15-18, and I Corinthians v, 1-5, the authority of the Church to cast out unworthy members, and shall explain the nature, use, and consequences of this censure. He

shall then administer the censure in the words following:

" '*Whereas*, A. B., a member of this church, has been, by sufficient proof, convicted of the sin of............, and after much admonition and prayer, obstinately refuses to hear the Church, and has manifested no evidence of repentance: *Therefore*, in the name and by the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, we, the Session of the Church of C. D., do pronounce him to be excluded from the sacraments and cut off from the fellowship of the Church.' "

He shall then offer prayer. (B. Ch. O., par. 246.)

860. Deposition. This applies only to a minister, ruling elder or deacon. "The moderator shall administer the censure in the words following:

" '*Whereas*, A. B., a minister of this Presbytery (or a ruling elder or deacon of this church), has been proved, by sufficient evidence, to be guilty of the sin of......................, we, the Presbytery (or church Session) of C. D., do adjudge him disqualified for the office of the Christian ministry (or ruling eldership, or deaconship), *and therefore*, we do hereby, in the name and by the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, depose from the office of a Christian minister (or ruling elder or deacon) the said A. B., and do prohibit him from exercising any of the functions thereof.'

"If the censure include suspension or excommunication, the moderator shall proceed to say: 'We do, moreover, by the same authority, suspend the said A. B. from the sacraments of the Church until he shall exhibit satisfactory evidence of sincere repentance,' or 'exclude the said A. B. from the sacraments, and cut him off from the fellowship of the Church.' "

The moderator shall then offer prayer.

(B. Ch. O., par. 247.)

CHAPTER XLIV

REMOVAL OF CENSURES

861. Preliminary steps. "After any person has been suspended from the sacraments, it is proper that the rulers of the church should frequently converse with him as well as pray with him and for him, that it would please God to give him repentance." (B. Ch. O., par. 248.)

862. Steps to be taken by the court in cases of suspension. "When the court shall be satisfied as to the reality of the repentance of the suspended offender, he shall be admitted to profess his repentance, either in the presence of the court alone, or publicly, and be restored to the sacraments of the church and to his office, if such be the judgment of the court, which restoration shall be declared to the penitent in words of the following import:

" '*Whereas*, you, A. B., have been debarred from the sacraments of the church (and from the office of the Gospel ministry, or ruling eldership, or deaconship), but have now manifested such repentance as satisfies the church, we, the Session (or Presbytery) of C. D., do hereby, in the name and by the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, absolve you from the said sentence of suspension, and do restore you to the full communion of the Church (and the exercise of your said office, and all the functions thereof).' "

The moderator shall then offer prayer.

(B. Ch. O., par. 249.)

863. Steps to be taken by the court in cases of excommunication. "When an excommunicated person shall be so affected with his state as to be brought to repentance and to desire to be readmitted to the communion of the church, the Session, having obtained sufficient evidence of his sincere penitence, shall proceed to restore him." (B. Ch. O., par. 250.)

864. **The restoration to be private or public.** "This (the restoration) may be done in the presence of the court or of the congregation, as seems best to the Session." (B. Ch. O., par. 250.)

865. **Form of address in restoration.** "On the day appointed for his restoration, the minister shall call upon the excommunicated person and propose to him, in the presence of the court or of the congregation, the following questions:

"Do you, from a deep sense of your great wickedness, freely confess your sin in thus rebelling against God and in refusing to hear His Church; and do you acknowledge that you have been, in justice and mercy, cut off from the communion of the Church?

"*Answer:* I do.

"Do you now voluntarily profess your sincere repentance and contrition for your sin and obstinancy; and do you humbly ask the forgiveness of God and His Church?

"*Answer:* I do.

"Do you sincerely promise, through divine grace, to live in all humbleness of mind and circumspection; and to endeavor to adorn by a holy life the doctrine of God our Saviour?

"*Answer:* I do.

"Here the minister shall give the penitent a suitable exhortation encouraging and comforting him. Then he shall pronounce the sentence of restoration in the following words:

" '*Whereas,* you, A. B., have been shut out from the communion of the Church, but have now manifested such repentance as satisfies the Church; in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and by His authority, we, the Session of this church, do declare you absolved from the sentence of excommunication formerly pronounced against you; and we do restore you to the communion of the church, that you may be a partaker of all the benefits of the Lord Jesus to your eternal salvation.' The whole shall be concluded with prayer and thanksgiving." (B. Ch. O., par. 250.)

866. **Restoration of deposed officer.** "The restoration of a deposed officer, after public confession has been made in a manner similar to that prescribed in the case of removal of censure from an excommunicated person, shall be announced to him by the moderator in the following form, namely:

867. **Form of address.**

" '*Whereas*, you, A. B., formerly a minister of this Presbytery (or ruling elder or deacon of this church), have been deposed from your office, but have now manifested such repentance as satisfies the Church; in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and by His authority, we, the Presbytery of C. D. (or the Session of this church), do declare you absolved from the said sentence of deposition formerly pronounced against you; and we do furthermore restore you to your said office, and to the exercise of all the functions thereof, whenever you may be orderly called thereto.' "

The moderator shall then offer prayer.

(B. Ch. O., par. 251.)

868. **Ruling elder or deacon.** "He cannot be allowed to resume the exercise of his office in the church without re-election by the people." (B. Ch. O., par. 252.)

869. **Steps when party removes from the court by which he was sentenced.** "When a person under censure shall remove to a part of the country remote from the court by which he was sentenced, and shall

desire to profess repentance and obtain restoration, it shall be lawful for the court, if it deems it expedient, to transmit a certified copy of its proceedings to the Session (or Presbytery) where the delinquent resides, which shall take up the case and proceed with it as though it had originated with itself." (B. Ch. O., par. 253.)

870. Restoration of deposed minister. "In the restoration of a minister who has been suspended or deposed, it is the duty of the Presbytery:

"1. To proceed with great caution.

"2. To first admit him to the sacraments, if he has been debarred from them.

"3. To grant him the privilege of preaching on probation for a time.

"4. To take steps to restore him to his office when satisfied. But the case shall always be under judicial consideration until the sentence of restoration has been pronounced." (B. Ch. O., par. 254.)

CHAPTER XLV

CASES WITHOUT PROCESS

871. Voluntary confession. "When any person shall come forward and make his offence known to the court, a full statement of the facts shall be recorded and judgment rendered without process." (B. Ch. O., par. 255.)

872. Member transferred to non-communing roll. "If a communing member of the church against whom no charges are pending shall request the Session to transfer his name to the roll of non-communing members, it shall be in the power of the Session to grant the request, and this action may be announced to the congregation should this seem wise and proper. This transfer, however, should not be made until the Session, after inquiry and due delay, is of the judgment that the request does not spring from temporary doubt or special temptation." (B. Ch. O., par. 256.)

873. Divestment of a minister. "A minister of the Gospel against whom there are no charges:

"1. If fully satisfied in his own conscience that God has not called him to the ministry, or

"2. If he has satisfactory evidence of his inability to serve the Church with acceptance, may report these facts at a stated meeting of Presbytery. At the next stated meeting, if, after full deliberation, the Presbytery shall concur with him in judgment, it may divest him of his office without censure. This provision shall, in like manner, apply with any necessary changes to the case of ruling elders and deacons; but in all such cases the Session of the church to which the ruling elder or the deacon who seeks demission belongs shall act as the Presbytery acts in similar cases where a minister is concerned." (B. Ch. O., par. 257.)

874. **Member or officer uniting with another evangelical Church.** "When a member or officer shall renounce the communion of this Church by joining some other evangelical Church, if in good standing, the irregularity shall be recorded, and his name erased." (B. Ch. O., par. 258.)

875. **Procedure when charges are pending against member.** "But if charges are pending against him, they shall be communicated to the church which he has joined. If the denomination be heretical, an officer shall have his name stricken from the roll, and all authority to exercise his office derived from this church shall be withdrawn from him; but a private member shall not be otherwise noticed than as above prescribed." (B. Ch. O., par. 258.)

CHAPTER XLVI

PROCEDURE FROM LOWER TO HIGHER COURT

876. **Modes in which the proceedings of lower courts come up under supervision of higher courts.** The acts and decisions of a lower court are brought before the higher court:

1. By review and control.
2. By reference.
3. By appeal.
4. By complaint. (B. Ch. O., par. 259.)

877. **The rights of the members of a lower court in the higher court.**

1. The members of the lower court "do not lose the right to sit, deliberate and vote in the higher court when the acts of the lower court are under (1) Review and control, and (2) Reference."

2. The members of the lower court "lose the right to sit, deliberate and vote in case of (3) Appeal and (4) Complaint." (B. Ch. O., par. 260.)

CHAPTER XLVII

REVIEW AND CONTROL

878. **Records to be sent to court next above.** "It is the right and duty of every court above the Session to review at least once a year the records of the court next below." (B. Ch. O., par. 261.)

879. **Result of failure to present records.** "The higher court may require them to be produced immediately or at any time fixed by this higher court." (B. Ch. O., par. 261.)

880. **Method of reviewing records by higher court.** "The higher court examines the records of a lower court to see:

"1. Whether the proceedings have been correctly recorded.

"2. Whether they have been regular and in accordance with the constitution.

"3. Whether they have been wise, equitable and suited to promote the welfare of the church.

"4. Whether the lawful injunctions of the higher court have been obeyed." (B. Ch. O., par. 262.)

881. **Record of approval by court.** "It is ordinarily sufficient for the higher court to merely record in its own minutes and in the records reviewed, whether it approves, disapproves or corrects the records in any particular." (B. Ch. O., par. 263.)

882. **How record of corrections is made.** The court whose records are corrected by a higher court should enter the corrections on the minutes of a subsequent meeting of the court and not in the records reviewed. The entry of corrections by the reviewing court is sufficient for the records reviewed.

883. **Report signed by the moderator.** The report of the committee reviewing the records of a lower court should be written in the records after the report has been adopted by the court, and then should be signed by the moderator.

884. **Procedure in judicial cases.** "Proceedings in judicial cases, however, shall not be dealt with under review and control when notice of appeal or complaint has been given the lower court." (B. Ch. O., par. 263.)

885. **Judgment of lower court not to be reversed.** In reviewing the records of a lower court, "no judgment of a lower court in a judicial case shall be reversed except by appeal or complaint." (B. Ch. O., par. 263.)

886. **Correction of irregularities.** "The following irregularities may occur:

"1. The courts may sometimes entirely neglect to perform their duty.

"2. Heretical opinions and corrupt practices may gain ground.

"3. Offenders may be suffered to escape.

"4. Irregularities may not be properly recorded.

"5. The records may not exhibit to higher court a full view of their proceedings.

"If, therefore, the next higher court be well advised that any such neglect or irregularity has occurred on the part of the lower court, it is incumbent on it to take cognizance of the same and to examine, deliberate, and judge in the whole matter as completely as if it had been recorded, and thus brought up by the review of the records." (B. Ch. O., par. 264.)

887. **Duty of appellate court in cases of gross neglect.**

1. "The court shall cite the court to appear.

2. "The court shall fix time and place.

3. "The court may reverse or redress the proceedings of the court below in other than judicial cases.

4. "The court may censure the delinquent court.

5. "The court may remit the whole matter to the delinquent court with injunction to take up and dispose of it in a constitutional manner.

6. "May stay all further proceedings in the case as circumstances may require." (B. Ch. O., par. 265.)

888. **Rules governing trial in lower court.** "In process against a lower court, the trial shall be conducted according to the rules provided for process against individuals, so far as they may be applicable." (B. Ch. O., par. 266.)

CHAPTER XLVIII

REFERENCES

889. **Nature of references.** "A reference is a written representation and application made by a lower court to a higher for advice, or other action, on a matter pending before the lower court, and is ordinarily to be made to the next higher court." (B. Ch. O., par. 267.)

890. **Subjects for reference.**

1. "New, delicate or difficult matters.
2. "Matters on which members of the lower court are seriously divided.
3. "Matters which relate to questions involving the constitution.
4. "Matters which relate to legal procedure respecting which the lower court feels the need of guidance."

(B. Ch. O., par. 268.)

891. **Information desired.** The lower court may ask:

1. "For advice only, or
2. "For final disposition of matter referred.
3. "For the trial of a judicial case with the request for the decision by the higher court."

(B. Ch. O., par. 269.)

892. **Procedure in making reference.** The lower court may appoint one or more of its members:

1. To represent the court.
2. To present the case.
3. To present the necessary records for a proper understanding and consideration of the matter referred. (B. Ch. O., par. 270; also par. 286.)

893. **Duties to be discharged by courts.** "Although references are sometimes proper, yet in general it is better that every court should discharge the duty as-

signed it under the law of the Church." (B. Ch. O., par. 271.)

894. **Higher court not required to accede to request of lower court.** "A higher court is not required to accede to the request of the lower, but it should ordinarily give advice when so requested." (B. Ch. O., par. 271.)

895. **Documents and testimony.** "When a court makes a reference, it ought to have all the testimony and other documents duly prepared, produced and in perfect readiness, so that the higher court may be able to fully consider and issue the case with as little difficulty or delay as possible." (B. Ch. O., par. 272.)

CHAPTER XLIX

APPEALS

896. Definition. "An appeal is the transfer to a higher court of a judicial case on which judgment has been rendered in the lower court." (B. Ch. O., par. 273.)

897. Who may appeal. An appeal "is allowable only to the party against whom the decision has been rendered." (B. Ch. O., par. 273.)

898. Parties to appeal. "The parties shall be known as the *appellant* and *appellee*." (B. Ch. O., par. 273.)

899. Next higher court only to receive appeal. "An appeal cannot be made to any court other than the next higher, except with its consent." (B. Ch. O., par. 273.)

900. Those entitled to appeal. "Only those who have submitted to a regular trial are entitled to an appeal. Those who have not submitted to a regular trial are not entitled to an appeal." (B. Ch. O., par. 274.)

901. Grounds of appeal. "The grounds of appeal are:

1. "Irregularity in proceedings in the lower court.
2. "Refusal of reasonable indulgence to a party on trial.
3. "Receiving improper evidence.
4. "Declining to receive proper evidence.
5. "Hurrying to a decision before all testimony is taken.
6. "Manifestation of prejudice in the case.
7. "Mistake or injustice in the judgment and censure." (B. Ch. O., par. 275.)

902. Notice of appeal. "Notice of appeal, with the reasons supporting it, shall be given the court before its rising, or shall within ten days thereafter be filed with the moderator or clerk of the court." (B. Ch. O., par. 276.)

903. **Time for appellant to lodge his appeal.** "The appellant shall lodge his appeal and the reasons therefor with the clerk of the higher court before the close of the second day of its sessions." (B. Ch. O., par. 277.)

904. **Duty of the clerk of the lower court.** "It shall be the duty of the clerk of the lower court to file with the clerk of the higher court before the close of the second day:

"(a) A copy of all proceedings in connection with the case;

"(b) The notice of appeal and reasons therefor;

"(c) The evidence and any papers bearing on the case." (B. Ch. O., par. 277.)

905. **Papers constituting the "record of the case."** "These (the papers referred to above) shall be known as 'the record of the case.'" (B. Ch. O., par. 277.)

906. **Consent of parties in the case.** "The higher court shall not admit or consider anything not found in this 'record' without consent of the parties in the case." (B. Ch. O., par. 277; also par. 210.)

907. **Effect of notice of appeal.** "Notice of appeal shall have the effect of suspending the judgment of the lower court until the case has been finally decided in the higher court." (B. Ch. O., par. 278.)

908. **Exception to effect of notice.** "If, however, the censure is suspension or excommunication from the sealing ordinances, or deposition from office, the court may, for sufficient reasons duly recorded, put the censure into effect until the case is finally decided." (B. Ch. O., par. 278.)

909. Procedure in the higher court. After the higher court has been advised by the clerk that all the requirements of paragraph 277, Book of Church Order, have been complied with, the following procedure shall be adopted:

"1. The reading of the complete record of the case.

"2. The omission by consent of the parties and the court of any part of the record deemed unnecessary to read.

"3. Hear the appellant, who has the right to opening and closing the argument.

"4. Hear the appellee.

"5. Members of appellate court shall be given an opportunity to express their opinions.

"6. The vote shall then be taken without further debate.

"7. On each specification, the question shall be asked: 'Shall this specification of error be sustained?'

"8. An explanatory minute may be adopted, which shall become a part of its record in the case."

(B. Ch. O., par. 279.)

910. Decision of higher court. It may be:

"1. To confirm in whole or in part the decision of the lower court.

"2. To reverse in whole or in part the decision of the lower court.

"3. To remit the case to lower court for the purpose of amending the record, should it appear incorrect or defective.

"4. To send the case back for a new trial.

"In every case, a full record shall be made, and a copy of it shall be sent to the lower court."

(B. Ch. O., par. 280.)

911. Appeal abandoned by appellant. "An appellant shall be considered to have abandoned his appeal if he does not appear before the higher court in person, or by counsel, by the second day of its meeting next ensuing the date of his notice of appeal." (B. Ch. O., par. 281.)

912. **Effect when appellant abandons his case.** "The judgment of the lower court will stand, unless he can give the court satisfactory explanation of his failure to appear and prosecute the appeal." (B. Ch. O., par. 281.)

913. **Spirit of appellant.** "If an appellant manifests a litigious or otherwise unchristian spirit in the prosecution of his appeal, he shall receive a suitable rebuke by the appellate court." (B. Ch. O., par. 282.)

914. **Lower court may be rebuked.** "If a lower court shall neglect to send up 'the record of the case,' or any part of it, to the injury of the appellant, it shall receive a proper rebuke from the higher court, and the judgment from which the appeal has been taken shall be suspended until 'the record' is produced upon which the issue can be fairly tried." (B. Ch. O., par. 283.)

CHAPTER L

COMPLAINTS

915. Nature of complaints.

1. "A complaint is a written representation made to a higher court against some act or decision of a lower court.

2. "It is the right of any communing member of the Church in good standing to make complaint against any action of a lower court to whose jurisdiction he is subject, except that no complaint is allowable in a judicial case in which an appeal is taken.

3. "A complaint shall not be made to any other court than the next higher, except with its consent." (B. Ch. O., par. 284.)

916. Complaint does not suspend action. "Notice of complaint shall not have the effect of suspending the action against which the complaint is made." (B. Ch. O., par. 285.)

917. Exception to this rule. "One-third of the members present when the action is taken shall vote for its suspension until the final decision in the higher court." (B. Ch. O., par. 285.)

918. Procedure before higher court. "The court against which complaint is made shall appoint one or more representatives to defend its action" in the higher court. (B. Ch. O., par. 286; also par. 270.)

919. Parties in complaint. "The parties in the case shall be known as:

1. "Complainant (the party making the complaint).
2. "Respondent (the court defending its action through its representatives)."

(B. Ch. O., par. 286.)

920. Provisions governing trial of complaint. "The provisions relating to appeals in paragraphs 276, 277, 278, 279, 281, 282, 283, and paragraphs 289, 292, Book of Church Order, shall, with any necessary changes, apply to a complaint." (B. Ch. O., par. 287.)

921. Judgment of higher court. "The higher court has power, in its discretion:

1. "To annul the whole, or
2. "Any part of the action of a lower court against which complaint has been made, or
3. "To send the matter back to the lower court with instructions for a new hearing."

(B. Ch. O., par. 288.)

922. Effect of a vote in appeals and complaints. "In voting upon a complaint, the vote shall be:

1. "*To sustain.* The effect of this shall be to sustain each and all of the items or counts of the complaint.
2. "*Not to sustain.* The effect of this shall be to annul each and all of the items or counts of the appeal or complaint.
3. "*To sustain in part.* The effect of this shall be to sustain one or more specific items or counts of the appeal or complaint." (B. Ch. O., pars, 289, 290.)

923. Voting to sustain in part; explanation. "Those voting to sustain in part shall be required, when voting, to state what item or items, count or counts, of the complaint they desire to sustain." (B. Ch. O., par. 291.)

924. Majority vote necessary. "In making up the vote on the complaint, only those items or counts shall be declared to be sustained for the sustaining of which a majority of the votes cast has been given." (B. Ch. O., par. 292.)

CHAPTER LI

DISSENTS AND PROTESTS

925. Nature of a dissent. "A dissent is a declaration on the part of one or more members of a minority in a court expressing a different opinion from that of the majority in a particular case." (B. Ch. O., par. 293.)

926. Entrance on records. "A dissent unaccompanied with reasons shall be entered on the records of the court." (B. Ch. O., par. 293.)

927. Nature of protest. "A protest is a more solemn and formal declaration by members of a minority, bearing their testimony against what they deem a mischievous or erroneous judgment, and is generally accompanied with a detail of the reasons on which it is founded." (B. Ch. O., par. 294.)

928. Manner of disposing of a protest or dissent. "If a protest or dissent be couched (1) in temperate language and (2) is respectful to the court,

1. "It shall be recorded.

2. "The court may, if deemed necessary, put an answer to the protest on the records along with it. But here the matter shall end unless the parties protesting obtain permission to withdraw their protest absolutely, or for the sake of amendment."

(B. Ch. O., par. 295.)

929. Who may protest. "None can join in a protest against a decision of any court except those who had a right to vote in the case." (B. Ch. O., par. 296.)

930. Time limit. "A protest should be submitted at the meeting at which the action was taken against which the protest is offered." (A. D. 1897, p. 92; M. G. A. 1875, p. 23.)

CHAPTER LII

JURISDICTION OF CHURCH COURTS

931. Transference of church membership. "When a church member shall remove his residence beyond the bounds of the congregation of which he is a member, so that he can no longer regularly attend its services, it shall be his duty to transfer his membership by presenting a certificate of dismission from the Session of the church of which he is a member to the church with which he wishes to unite." (B. Ch. O., par. 297.)

932. What to do when the church has no Session. "When the church of which he is a member has no Session, or for other good reasons it seems impossible for the member to secure a certificate of dismission, he may be received by the Session upon other satisfactory testimonials." (B. Ch. O., par. 297.)

933. Notice of reception to be sent church. When a Session receives a member upon "other satisfactory testimonials, the church of which he was a member should be duly notified." (B. Ch. O., par. 297.)

934. Duty of pastor and Session towards non-resident members. "When a church member shall remove his residence beyond the bounds of the church of which he is a member into the bounds of another, it shall be the duty of the pastor and ruling elders of the church of which he is a member, as far as possible, to continue pastoral oversight of him and to inform him that, according to the teachings of our Book of Church Order, it is his duty to transfer his membership as soon as practicable to the church in whose bounds he is living." (B. Ch. O., par. 298.)

935. Duty of pastor and Session to members moving to another church. "It shall also be the duty of the pastor and ruling elders of the church from whose bounds the member moved to notify the pastor and ruling elders of the church into whose bounds he has moved and request them to take pastoral oversight of the member, with a view to having him transfer his membership." (B. Ch. O., par. 298.)

936. **Non-resident roll of members.** "If a member, after having thus been advised, shall neglect for twelve months to have his membership transferred, his name shall be retired by the Session to a separate roll for non-resident members, and he shall be notified." (B. Ch. O., par. 298.)

937. **Dismission effected.** Paragraph 299 of the Book of Church Order declares that "members of one church dismissed to another church shall be held to be under the jurisdiction of the Session dismissing them until they form a regular connection with that to which they have been dismissed." The Book of Church Order says nothing as to whether an elder or a deacon so dismissed shall continue to exercise the functions of his office or not after he has been dismissed. Neither does it define by the word "jurisdiction" the relation of the member dismissed. The practice of some Presbyterian bodies is not to allow members so dismissed to deliberate and vote in a congregational meeting, nor to exercise the functions of any office after dismission.

938. **Reporting of non-resident members.** They shall be reported in the whole number of members. The Book of Church Order makes no provision for not reporting them as it does for *retired* members.

939. **Retired members not reported to Presbytery.** "The name of any member whose residence has been unknown for two years to the Session shall be retired to a separate roll for retired members, and the names on this retired roll shall not be reported to Presbytery in the annual statistical report as a part of the total membership of the church." (B. Ch. O., par. 298.)

940. Discretion in dismissing members whose names are on the retired roll. "If a person on the retired roll shall apply for a letter of dismission, the Session may use its discretion in granting it." (B. Ch. O., par. 298.)

941. Ministers, licentiates and candidates under the jurisdiction of the Presbytery dismissing them. "When a Presbytery shall dismiss a minister, licentiate or candidate, the name of the Presbytery to which he is dismissed shall be given in the certificate, and he shall remain under the jurisdiction of the Presbytery dismissing him until received by the other." (B. Ch. O., par. 300.)

942. Certificate valid for one year only. "No certificate of dismission from either a Session or a Presbytery shall be valid testimony of good standing for a longer period than one year, unless its earlier presentation be hindered by some providential cause; and such certificates given to persons who have left the bounds of the Session or Presbytery granting them shall certify the standing of such persons only to the time of their leaving those bounds." (B. Ch. O., par. 301.)

943. Letters of dismission to members of dissolved church. When a Presbytery dissolves a church, either of its own motion or upon the request of the few remaining members, the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery should be directed to issue letters of dismission to the remaining members to some church, either upon the request of these members or by the order of the Presbytery.

944. Divested minister assigned membership in church. "When a Presbytery shall divest a minister of his office without censure, or depose him without excommunication, it shall assign him to membership in some particular church, subject to the approval of the Session of that church." (B. Ch. O., par. 302.)

CHAPTER LIII

JUDICIAL CASES

945. Voting in judicial cases. The question was raised in 1904 as to the interpretation of the voting by the members. The Assembly said the voting shall take place after all the members have expressed their opinion. This does not mean that every member *must* express his opinion, but all who desire to do so. (A. D. 1922, p. 15; M. G. A. 1904, p. 19.)

The Revised Rules of Discipline make the matter clear by saying: "(3) Opportunity shall be given the members of the appellate court to express their opinions." (B. Ch. O., par. 279.)

946. Force of judicial decisions. "The General Assembly has the right to send its deliverances directly to the Presbyteries." (A. D. 1922, p. 1097; M. G. A. 1878, p. 610.)

947. Right of overture, etc. "While the General Assembly may recommend that overtures should ordinarily be sent from the Synod, it cannot deny the right of Presbyteries, the constituent elements of the Assembly, nor of individuals, to overture the General Assembly whenever circumstances may require." (See subject of Overtures under General Assembly, par. 354.) (A. D. 1922, p. 1097; M. G. A. 1878, p. 610.)

948. Jurisdiction in cases of complaint. It is not proper for one court to take jurisdiction of a matter of a complaint while the same cause is pending in another judicatory. (M. G. A. 1877, p. 423.)

949. Difference between appeal and complaint. An appeal can only be taken where there has been a regular judicial trial. Other cases of reference to a higher court should be as a complaint. (M. G. A. 1889, p. 615.)

950. Right to enjoin observance of judicial decision. The Presbytery has the right to enjoin upon its ministers, ruling elders and deacons the observance of the judicial decisions of the General Assembly, especially when the Presbytery does not intend to limit either liberty of private judgment or the constitutional right of proper discussion. (M. G. A. 1889, p. 589.)

951. Assembly deliverances.

"1. That judicial admonition is a censure whose legal force terminates when it is inflicted.

2. The person on whom judicial admonition is inflicted is in good and regular standing, in the sense that he is not under judicial process or censure.

3. Such a person, not being under judicial process or censure, is entitled to a letter of dismission, if he desires it, to a church in connection with this Assembly." (A. D. 1910, p. 669; M. G. A. 1881, p. 378.)

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